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WEAPONS FROM WASTE

BY MARQUIS W. CHILDS

WE HAVE been probably the most wasteful people in the history of the world. The luxury of the Pharaohs and the Roman Emperors was reserved for a small group at the top of the pyramid. In America it extended through a whole class, and the careless attitudes of a luxury-loving people extended far down into our society. We have flung away in prodigal indifference the stored-up energy of geologic eons. It has been a long carefree spree with seemingly no limit to the riches at our command. There was an abrupt end to all that on December 7 at Pearl Harbor when American complacency was jarred as never before.

Today millions of men and women in every part of the country want to help win the war. They know that total war takes every bit of man power and every ounce of material that can possibly be spared and they want to do their share in the war behind the seas — the war that must be waged in every factory and home and on every farm in all of America.

Our habits of waste are not so deeply ingrained that we cannot overcome them with a little discipline and a little organization. There is a bedrock of American

thrift on which to build. It has been overlaid with a plating of shiny chromium but down beneath it is still there, a solid inheritance out of the past to be drawn on in this time of national need.

No Pharaoh ever moved with such speed and, at the same time, with such splendor and elegance as your average suburban business man when he left his home to drive to the station or to town in his new super-duper, hyper-triplex, early 1942 model. Think of it for a moment. Here is a machine costing from \$750 to \$2500, with a power of anywhere from 90 to 160 horses. Thousands of Pharaohs whirring along the high-speed highways and the great boulevards into each American city.

The lord and master's children have been driven to school even though the distance was absurdly short, five or six blocks, a healthy walk for anyone. The family car — in a great many instances it was two cars — was used for the most trivial errands. We were in danger of becoming a legless nation.

It was not alone the irreplaceable oil deposits that kept millions of motorcars in motion. Behind the flow of traffic on America's highways was an army of men,

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most of them young men. I have never seen any estimate of the amount of man power — in factories, service stations, oil wells, and refineries — required to sustain America's 27,500,000 motorcars but it must have been very large. From this same army we must now recruit men to sustain our forces at war. For each man in the field, we have been told, eighteen men are required behind the lines to furnish the materials of war. One of our national jokes, a favorite subject of cartoonists, has been the number of young men who dusted and rubbed and shined your car when you stopped to buy five gallons of gasoline and a quart of motor oil. These young men will now be needed for far more urgent tasks.

If the motorcar has been a fabulous luxury, so has the average American household. It has been a legend in Europe that the contents of the garbage pail of the average American household would keep a European peasant, his wife, and his children in health and comfort. Food worth millions of dollars and representing a greater real wealth in minerals taken out of the soil has gone to waste each year. Our food habits have been fussy. Often we have discarded the very elements that contained health-building vitamins. We have pared and polished and refined until not only the national budget of resources but the national well-being has suffered. Servants have been not merely indifferent but deliberately hostile to the idea of economy.

In the average middle-class American household there are machines almost as fabulous as the motorcar — the radio, the electric refrigerator, the mechanical washing machine that does everything but iron and sort the clothes. These machines have been treated with casual indifference, entrusted to incompetent servants, and ignored until a breakdown occurred. This has been on the principle that the repairman could always come running around, or that next year there would be a new model that could be bought on the installment plan. We have

recently seen the results of a survey of what the repairman all too often does when he comes to fix the broken radio or refrigerator. He has sometimes replaced perfectly good parts with new parts in order to make his bill larger. Precious metal and precious time went into fabricating those parts.

Our children have been conditioned to the same carelessness. They too have been encouraged to believe that there would 'always be a new one.' Lights are left turned on all over the house. Electric current is cheap in America, but think what those lights all over the country add up to in energy cost. The outdoor Christmas lighting in the average American suburb has been gay and amusing, but consider the copper stored in millions of attics from year's end to year's end.

This same prodigality has prevailed in the wardrobe of the average prosperous American family. With insistent regularity style changes have decreed new clothes when the old were scarcely worn. This was diverting, but it is a form of waste that we can scarcely afford in wartime. Too many American children have been totally indifferent to the value of the expensive clothes bought for them. They have lost caps, coats, mufflers, and gloves with happy abandon. It was annoying, but you could always buy more.

In the matter of service we have been pampered within an inch of our lives. Think for a moment of the great American pastime of 'shopping.' Shopping has been a recreation, and you debated earnestly, motoring into town, whether you would go to the movies or to Macy's. You might look at those new electric mixing gadgets. The Joneses next door have one, and they make the most marvelous frozen Daiquiris. If you bought the gadget, as like as not you had it delivered in the department-store truck to the remote suburb in which you live. This has been one of the most flagrant wastes, a waste not only of materials but

of man power. Consider for a moment the metal and chemical industries necessary to furnish the hundreds of thousands of beauty shops throughout the country. That means not only woman power in the shops themselves, but man power.

The average man in his office has been as much at fault in this matter of waste as the average wife at home. We have known from long experience the kind of conspicuous gadgets that contribute little or nothing in value. The engraved announcements, the embossed pencils, the chromium doodads, the blonde receptionists — all these have made for surface display, but on the balance sheet of total productivity they must be entered on the negative side.

They were part of the familiar American past, a lavish past which Europe never knew except as Europe enviously tried to imitate the American pattern. Germany, beginning in 1933 or 1934, and Britain beginning in 1939 had to curtail civilian consumption, but it was a problem on a vastly different scale than that which confronts this country today.

II

In Germany the civilian program can be traced back to the last war. In 1915 and 1916 house-to-house campaigns were thoroughly organized to salvage every scrap of material that could possibly be used in the war machine. The Nazi Party has provided an organization ready-made to reach into every German home for the prevention of waste and the salvaging of materials necessary for building munitions, planes, and tanks. For the Germans, faced with serious shortages of essential minerals, this was an absolute necessity. And the achievement from 1933 to 1939 was a formidable one.

The Hitler Youth order has been the chief organization used in the household conservation program. All German housewives were carefully instructed to save tin, aluminum, rubber, copper,

bones, glass containers, paper, and any surplus fats. Each week, members of the Hitler Youth in full uniform called on each householder to collect the week's savings, which were preserved and put aside according to instruction. In a police state, such as Germany is, those who failed to save were inevitably reported to higher authorities. Hitler's young fanatics saw to that. If you failed to save, you must be a waster, and if you were a waster, then you were not a good Nazi. From that point on the abyss opened up. It was called a 'voluntary' system.

In industry all plant managers are required to turn over to official collectors on the tenth of every month each ounce of scrap metal that has accumulated. And the penalties in effect even before the outbreak of the war were so severe that no industrialist was likely to be absent-minded. Before the success of the campaign in the West, railings, lamp-posts, and all other forms of structural steel had virtually disappeared from the German scene. Looting of the conquered countries and the dismantling of the Maginot Line have somewhat relieved the metal scarcity in Germany. Down comes the Eiffel Tower. And at home the civilian program is pushed just as vigorously as it has been during the past seven years.

The civilian campaign against waste in Great Britain has been a striking success. For the most part it was organized after the outbreak of the war in 1939. It steadily gained momentum, and the results add up to a startling total. It is estimated that British housewives saved during 1940 enough scrap metal to build an armada of sixteen thousand tanks, enough kitchen scraps to feed hundreds of thousands of hogs, and enough paper to fill a procession of one hundred thousand large trucks. This was the equivalent of one hundred ships' cargoes from abroad, ships which could therefore be diverted to carrying other vital cargoes.

In Britain the salvage campaign was

divided among sixteen hundred local authorities, each local authority whose district comprises a population of ten thousand or more being under orders to furnish monthly salvage returns to the salvage department of the Ministry of Supply. The collection of wastepaper, scrap metal, and household bones is compulsory. The reports made by the local authorities enable the Ministry of Supply to keep informed of the movement of waste material to industry. The money derived from the sale of salvaged materials is retained by the local authorities who meet all the expenses of collecting and marketing.

Housewives have been educated by radio broadcasts, government leaflets, newspaper articles, and house-to-house calls by volunteer organizations. Wherever possible, the collecting is done by established collection services maintained by municipalities. In small towns and in rural areas the Women's Voluntary Services, the Boy Scouts, and the Girl Guides are doing the job. The manpower problem is acute in England today, and some municipalities have substituted women trash collectors for men. In their neat blue uniforms, the women are getting better results than men in encouraging householders to save waste materials.

Meat bones are processed in several factories, including one in South London which is the largest of its kind in Europe. Tin cans go through several processes which salvage the steel, the coating of tin, and even the solder. Wastepaper is pulped and used again, much of it in the munitions industry. Of the 600,000 tons of paper which yearly go into British homes, 250,000 tons were returned in 1940 for salvage, and for 1941 the total was close to 350,000 tons.

In New Zealand there has been an intensive drive for scraps with the slogan 'Weapons from Waste' blazoned everywhere. Exhibitions have been held throughout the Dominion, showing the waste products wanted and the weapons

that can be made from them. In the first weeks of the drive ninety tons of nonferrous metals were collected, all donated in small amounts at convenient collection depots. Railways transported the collections to industries free of charge.

Even in Japan, where the very low standard of living has made waste almost impossible, a government conservation and salvage campaign has meant a saving of thousands of tons of essential war materials. This was applied particularly to scrap metals and wastepaper. Under strict government watch, Japanese householders are required to surrender to official collectors every snippet of material that is not actually needed to sustain a meagre kind of life. This has been going on in Japan for five years and more, and each year the screw is turned a little tighter.

III

Here in our own country a wartime government has only begun to apply arbitrary wartime rationing. With us it is for the most part a voluntary program, and if we draw on American ingenuity and American resourcefulness to make it succeed, then we may never have to come to the rationing that has been clamped down on most of the rest of the world. If we husband our resources, we shall have enough for all with a generous surplus for those peoples who until now have borne most of the burden of the democracies' war against totalitarianism.

First on our conservation list are those commodities immediately affected by the war in the Pacific — rubber, tin, wool, Manila fibre for making rope, tea, sugar, chromite, manganese, and tungsten for hardening steel. At the top of the list comes rubber. The order which has been issued by the Office of Price Administration makes it certain that for a long period of time rubber will be available only for those civilian uses considered essential to sustain life and to maintain

industrial efficiency. Rubber consumption has been cut to about one fifth of normal, and this means that there will be no tires for private passenger automobiles unless and until there is a drastic change in the far Pacific. And the powers-that-be in Washington are not encouraging the public to expect such a change.

The average life of all the tires now on American motorcars — that is, old and new tires all lumped together — is nine thousand miles. It is our job from here on to make each one of these miles a useful mile. It is a self-policing, self-administering job which we can do through our own knack for organization, without the need for any government Gestapo.

A hundred economies occur at once. We shall have to regain the use of our legs. It should be possible with little difficulty to curtail the use of the family car by one third or a half and yet have everyone in the family show a definite gain in health and in temper. Communities everywhere, and particularly those out of reach of public transportation, will want to organize at once on a share-the-car basis. It should be fairly simple to work out for the average suburban community a schedule of private cars going at seven-thirty, at eight, at eight-thirty, with each driver driving, say, one day a week. From now on it will be distinctly unpatriotic to ride alone.

The same system can be worked out for driving children to school where there are no buses. Incidentally, commuters who live out of range of transportation by public conveyance will want to be looking into ways and means of getting such transportation, for buses have priority for tires while private passenger cars do not. Doctors can obtain tires for cars they use in making professional calls and so can visiting nurses, but this priority privilege is being carefully restricted by local defense councils who know local conditions and the truth behind priority applications.

At the present writing, there is no certainty as to what may be expected from retreaded tires. Retreading does after all take a certain amount of new rubber, and it remains to be seen whether even limited quantities will be available for retreading. One large company announced a retreaded wartime tire which could be used at speeds up to thirty-five miles an hour, but this was before the overall rationing order had been announced. Certainly in the past this has been a flagrant form of waste. Unlike the French, who had their tires retreaded just as they had their shoes half-soled, we deliberately ignored the thousands of extra miles that might have been obtained by the retreading process.

As was done during the last war, department stores can combine and coordinate their delivery schedules to save not only rubber and gasoline but man power. They can agree to stop the absurd practice of delivering a spool of thread to the outer suburbs. When it comes to man power, the savings are fairly obvious. The filling-station nonsense will have to end. I think it will come actually as a relief to the average motorist not to be besieged by willing young men clamoring for the privilege of wiping his windshield.

A word of caution is necessary, of course. Saving man power on the civilian side will contribute to national welfare and national morale only if war production is constantly stepped up and more and more men are absorbed out of civilian industry. Otherwise the effect on morale may be definitely harmful. Automobile production has now been stopped. Mechanics and even semi-skilled garage attendants were becoming scarce even before the auto orders. A more serious problem will be to find a useful outlet for the thousands of salesmen and other white-collar employees attached to the motor industry.

If most of the filling stations on the Atlantic seaboard remain closed from 7 P.M. to 7 A.M. from now on, it will be a

net gain for our economy. Why not extend compulsory liability insurance, which would help to take off the highway many private cars that are today an economic waste and a social menace? At the same time this would help to keep money out of the consumers' goods market.

IV

It is imperative that individuals and communities exercise their own diligence and ingenuity. In a variety of ways paper is vital to the munitions industry. Newspapers, discarded magazines, cellophane, paper bags, wrapping paper, and especially cardboard and corrugated paper, should be put away and tied in bundles that can be easily handled. Agencies such as the Goodwill Industries and the Salvation Army have long since initiated the collection of wastepaper, which is sold and the proceeds devoted to the work of the agency. Where such a collection service is not available, schools could well organize a paper-salvage campaign, the money taken in to go for some school purpose. Church groups, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, numerous organizations already exist that could be used to excellent advantage in the salvage campaign. Wherever possible, of course, it is best to encourage such waste collections as have already been started. With wastepaper at sixty cents a hundred pounds there is a selfish as well as a patriotic motive in saving. Brown paper has considerably less value than white paper, but unless the community collection is organized on a wholesale pattern it is hardly feasible for the householder to do his or her own sorting, aside from tying newspapers in separate bundles.

A source of fantastic waste has been the elaborate packaging and wrapping that American merchants have developed. Take for example the tube of tooth paste that you buy at the neighborhood drugstore. At the factory the paste is put in the tube, the tube is put in a light

cardboard box, and these boxes are packed in a wooden crate which contains light wood or cardboard partitions separating each box. When he receives his consignment, the druggist destroys the wooden crate and the cardboard that may have come inside it, at the time that he puts the tooth paste on his shelves. Then when he sells a tube of tooth paste, he wraps the box containing the tube in paper and seals the paper with cellulose tape or ties it with string.

We must learn at once to carry packages home and to carry them with only one wrapping and not two or three. Obvious waste in packaging and merchandising should disappear immediately. There is no reason in the world why a shirt sent back from the laundry should have an ounce or two of cardboard enfolded in it. Or six pins. The aluminum in cigarette foil has already disappeared, and the vast majority of smokers will gladly forgo that intangible freshness which is said to be sealed in with cellophane wrapping.

Under the salvage plan worked out by OPM's Bureau of Industrial Conservation, state committees are being formed to which representatives of waste- and scrap-consuming industries as well as representatives of waste-collecting charitable agencies should be appointed.

The average middle-class household should yield a harvest of scrap metal if the householder looks with an appraising eye into closets, attic, tool shed, and garden. A first survey should garner outworn garden tools, pots and pans, doorknobs and locks, ash trays, window stripping, coat hangers, picture frames, discarded fireplace equipment, wire fencing and iron railings. A little rust does no harm. Then a regular collection should be kept of tooth-paste tubes and other metal discards.

Worn-out auto tires and tubes, rubbers and overshoes, old bath or sink mats, should be hoarded for the salvage collection. Rags are of vital importance. All cast-off clothing, sheets, towels, flour

and sugar sacks, carpets and burlap bags in good condition, should be saved. The collector should not be called unless paper has reached a hundred pounds, which is approximately a stack of newspapers about five feet high. Rags, metals, and rubber should be kept separately, in bags or boxes if possible, and given to the collector along with the accumulation of paper. Needless to say, nothing should be discarded which is still of use and must be replaced by something new. That kind of excessive zeal means not a net gain but a net loss.

This, incidentally, raises a point of primary importance to the men and women on the domestic front. Out of necessity we shall learn to give far greater care to the expensive and complicated equipment of our households, since it will be almost irreplaceable for the duration of the war. For instance, electric refrigerators, vacuum cleaners, and electric washers should be oiled on a definite schedule. Nor should they be entrusted to indifferent servants. Clothing, and especially wool clothing, must be given greater care, the amount of wool for civilian consumption having been cut by 60 per cent. And perhaps as certain chemicals grow scarcer we shall of necessity limit our recourse to the cleaner. Brushing and sunning are sometimes a substitute.

Two things the OPM specifies should *not* be saved at this time — old razor blades and tin cans. The amount of metal derived from razor blades is too small to make collection worth-while, say OPM's experts. (That may change before the war is ended and I intend to go on with my own private collection.) Except in one area, and that on a limited scale, there are no plants equipped to salvage tin cans. We have each year dumped thousands of tons of metal on the nation's smoking garbage dumps, there to be lost forever. Apparently nothing can be done to salvage waste cans during the emergency. The problem is very real, first, because 33½ per

cent of our tin comes from Malaya, and secondly, because steel, a far more important ingredient in so-called tin cans, is needed for tanks and guns. The tin content of the ordinary can has been reduced to about 2 per cent, so small a portion that silver has been considered as a possible substitute.

Since metal cans cannot be salvaged, the objective is to use glass containers wherever possible. This means home canning and home gardens. Secretary of Agriculture Claude R. Wickard on December 19 announced goals for the canning industry for 1942 of a total pack of peas, tomatoes, snap beans, and corn 15 per cent above the record 1941 pack. It must be remembered, however, that vast quantities of food — in cans — must still go to strictly rationed Britain. Large supplies are necessary for our armed forces. Therefore, each glass jar of tomato juice put up at home will save not only the metal in a can otherwise bought from the store, but also the time and energy of a man whose services could be used otherwise. Home preserving in thousands of homes will also mean a material saving in rail transportation.

While the objective is to develop a million new gardens, the expansion program is being introduced cautiously in the hope that the mistakes of the last war can be avoided. Beginning gardeners are being advised against spading up the backyard, which very likely has a base of bricks and old tin cans. Many garden seeds were formerly imported from Europe, and while American firms have now made up most of this deficiency there will be more reason than ever this year why the amateur gardener should not repeat his customary mistake of buying twice as many seeds as he will be able to plant. Likewise sprays and fertilizers will be scarce.

Where school and community gardens are started, the Department of Agriculture has advised that they should be under the supervision of an experienced

gardener who will know a tomato worm from a cucumber beetle. County agents are to be enlisted as supervisors in this war for food. The garden campaign is directed particularly at farm housewives who in recent years have more and more resorted to the can from the grocer's shelf. Demonstration gardens are recommended to teach farm wives how to plan and plant for the greatest service in the Victory Garden campaign.

This suggests a major source of American waste. By way of the American garbage pail and the alley bonfire there has been destroyed enough humus material each year to replenish all of China. The outer leaves of cabbage and lettuce, carrot and turnip tops, cut flowers past their day, to say nothing of the leaves that drop each fall — all of this is precious. Now would be a good time to reverse that waste. Anyone who has a square of earth should prepare a humus bed. The grounds of coffee and tea make as good a leavening for a clayey soil as the expensive humus preparations advertised in the gardening magazines. If your patriotic zeal sends you into the garden, then use purchased materials sparingly, for they are scarce, and be sure to get the best possible advice on technique.

V

The waste on the average American farm, particularly with the rise in tenancy, has been almost as conspicuous as the waste in the city and town. Valuable farm equipment has been allowed to rust in the field. When it finally fell to pieces, the answer was simply to buy another. County agents are now directing a metal-salvage campaign which should produce thousands of tons of steel from the heaps on which these rusted hulks were dumped. This is a form of waste we cannot conceivably continue during a total war. Farmers have been warned to order necessary replacement parts so that the implement industry can gauge its need for metal.

Old machinery must be made to do for the duration.

Food conservation and food substitutes within the home can help toward winning the war. Dehydrated fruits and vegetables that can be bought in bulk will save on containers. While it has a poisonous sound because of its Nazi origin, the one-dish meal once a week is not really a bad idea. It is not that we lack essential foods, since there are still surpluses of wheat and corn, but men, machines, and energy are required to convert the raw material into human food. And to sit down to a simple dish once a week would give every household opportunity to contribute to the common cause by a small sacrifice. As a matter of fact, we owe to the defense drive of a year ago a definite dietary gain that followed from the addition of vitamin B₁ to the white fluff which in recent times has passed for bread.

The critical metal shortages have brought drastic changes in the materials available for household equipment. High-pressure cookers for canning are no longer on the market, and housewives who were not foresighted will now have to borrow from their more fortunate neighbors. A better method is suggested by the Bureau of Home Economics in the Department of Agriculture, which has recently issued a handbook on *Community Food Preservation Centres*. This tells how existing supplies may be combined for the benefit of all.

Rugged individualists will discover their own ways to economy. We could easily forgo overheating our homes to seventy-five or eighty degrees and thereby, it is a safe guess, reduce the number of winter colds. If wire coat hangers are not saved for the metal collection, they must be returned to the cleaner, who is already experiencing difficulty in getting a sufficient stock. We are a highly ingenious people, and now that we have set our minds to this task innumerable economies will occur which will not actually lower America's living standard.

It is merely that for the period of the war we shall have to sacrifice the frills and the wasteful excesses.

Millions of Americans want to do more than that. They want to know how they can make a positive contribution. In any war, of course, the civilian must fortify himself with a large degree of patience. He must be prepared to accept the orders that come from above and do his share to the best of his ability. Through planning from the top it will be possible to achieve standardization of clothing and shoes which will mean tremendous savings. The pattern was set in 1918 by Bernard M. Baruch's War Industries Board.

While thus far little more than a beginning has been made, we must expect to see standardization extended very rapidly. As was done in the fall of 1918, colors of shoes can be limited and the introduction of new lasts stopped. Shoes can be reduced to standard classes which the trade, as in 1918, can agree to sell at the prices stamped on each shoe. The savings here are obvious. In 1918 one tanner who had been turning out leather in eighty-one colors and shades was able to simplify his plant to produce only three colors and thereby was saved the necessity of carrying in stock raw hides and leather to the value of many thousands of dollars.

Similar savings can be effected in the clothing industry. A limitation on the length of sack coats and the length and sweep of overcoats, as was imposed in 1918, will mean a substantial reduction in the use of wool. An arbitrary cut in the number of models of suits each season will not only save wool yardage but will reduce the number of trunks carried by traveling salesmen. The standardization schedule for the women's garment industry, adopted in the fall of 1918, was estimated to mean savings of 20 to 25 per cent in yardage. Standardization of colors, together with certain restrictions in styles of sweaters and other knitted articles, released 33

per cent of the wool in that industry.

At the end of this year we are likely to look different than we look today. Less glossy, perhaps; perhaps more comfortable. The last war did away with the old steel-ribbed corset. If the rubber shortage persists, its modern counterpart, the lastex girdle, may follow it into the discard. Hatmakers will of necessity find substitutes for wool felt. The economies of the average American family which will go so far toward alleviating material shortages will also make it possible to buy defense bonds and pay the higher taxes that 1942 is certain to bring.

On each and every one of us will fall part of the responsibility for seeing that wartime restrictions work. Ours is a democratic, a voluntary, society. The rubber-rationing order is being carried out by local rationing committees. Other restrictions will be self-administered in thousands of American communities. Pull and influence have far less opportunity of operation among neighbors.

All this implies a drawing together of Americans in a common purpose. The trend of modern life has been to shatter us into lonely fragments, and now the war has reversed that trend. Under normal circumstances each man has been interested in his salary or his profit, and the slight bonds that have linked him to our society have been chiefly those with others with the same profit motive. Outside his company or his office, possibly, in older communities, his neighborhood, the world has ended and he has been a stranger with the only link the impersonal one of the newspaper or the radio. Now he must feel with a sense of welcome participation that he is part of something bigger, part of a tremendous common effort. This is the cement that welds our society together and it will be no less essential in the critical postwar adjustment, after victory and peace have come, than it is today in the midst of the most far-reaching conflict the world has ever seen.

BEFORE INVASION

BY AGNES NEWTON KEITH

September 1, 1941

HERE in Sandakan, North Borneo, the season is spring, and that is the hotter season which precedes the hottest one. This season enables you to understand why this land has always had one strong defense: what no man wants but we, no man will trouble to take.

Today that defense has gone, for we are in the centre of Japan's South Seas expansion scheme. For the first time since I have been writing about North Borneo there is a chance that someone may know where it is. We are on all of the war maps now, a shaded area like a black wolf's head with arrows pointing towards us from Singapore, Netherlands East Indies, the Philippine Islands, and Japan.

Here in sun-faded frame houses that face on a harbor in the Sulu Sea live seventy-five Europeans and twelve thousand Asiatics. This spring the water in the harbor is lukewarm and palely blue, its surface seldom breaks, its reflections scarcely waver, and the heat spreads over it like an invisible force. Drowned in a warm opaque inertia, the people in the town move slowly, those on the water doze in their boats, and those in their houses breathe laboriously. It is a surprise to find that the faculties of love and of hate and of fear still live, in this coma of heat, while a sweating people in a sweating land wait for the sky to cool, the stars to show, the heat to break, and the evening broadcast from London.

Some of us have already listened to

Don Bell of Manila, at noontime, but we do not trust him completely. He gives uncensored news, and that is too strong for sensitive stomachs now. We prefer to consider him unreliable. When trouble is a safe distance from you, you can afford to believe rumors as well as facts; but when it is vital to you, your nervous system must be spared from false alarms, it must be kept in good condition for the approaching time when the supreme exertion will be demanded of it. So although we listen to other broadcasts, we order our fears and our hopes by Daventry. Censorship is a strong drug, and not easy to free yourself from when once taken.

Carroll Alcott will come over the air at 7 P.M. from Shanghai. He is not neutral, he is belligerent American. We like him, the Japanese do not. The air is full of rumors about him: rumors that do not come via the radio; rumors that he wears a metal waistcoat, that his life is constantly in danger, and that he has been beaten up three times by people friendly to the Axis. He is a brave man. Never once does his fierceness falter.

Tonight we wait for news of the war in Russia, where a single life has lost all value and a foe becomes a friend; for news of the war in Africa, where generals and regiments disappear like water dripping through sand; for news of the Battle of the Atlantic, where heroes' bodies float like dynamited fish in cold North oceans. To say that we wait optimistically is wrong, but to say that we wait

downheartedly is also wrong; rather we wait with emotion suspended. Whatever the news is, we can accept it; but no matter how bad it may be, it will never be bad enough to make us give up.

As for myself, an American by birth and still a United States citizen, I watch with pride in these my husband's people. Wherever the map is British, there is cause for that pride. The world knows the word 'defeat,' but the British do not.

This tree-tangled land on the equator may soon be besieged; this tiny Asiatic town of flimsy shops and red roofs may be subject to attack by sea and by air; the very jungle that encloses us may become our refuge. Some of the colonials here are old and longing to go home to England, but there is no place for them in England, and no space in the ships to take them there, and no one to fill their jobs here if they go. Some are young, of the stuff that makes heroes or corpses, and they are ready to be either, and Empire Orders command them to be civil servants instead. Some are middle-aged and tired and need special medical care that they cannot get here; many are lonely for the wives who are not allowed out now; some have lost their homes by air raids in England, and others by occupation in the Channel Islands. All have had losses, all have suffered in ways that will win them no medals; all are without glory, but not without bravery.

Here are the parents whose children have grown suddenly into men without their seeing them — men who fight today in the Air Force and the Navy and the Army. Here are the fathers of eldest sons who have been lost at sea, and killed in action, and confined in German prison camps.

II

Take a look at our Asiatic Empire here. This is the enviable and fecund land that Japan now accuses the white man of bartering away from his Asiatic

brother, and holding to its detriment against the projected Japanese New Order of Benevolence for Asia. See here before you the island of Borneo, with the northern part owing allegiance to a British King and revenue to a Chartered Company, and the southern two thirds — Dutch Borneo — bowing to the refugee Queen, Wilhelmina. The northern part, where we are, is washed by the waters of the South China Sea, the Sulu Sea, and the Celebes, and if ever there was romance in names, here it is.

Look at the population of this state of North Borneo — 270,000 Asiatics and 350 European British. Observe that the natives of this country receive free medical care from Government; the women in the villages receive instruction and assistance in midwifery from Government nurses; the free functioning of village life and native custom is protected by Government; villages are neither moved nor disturbed for European convenience, and native labor is not exploited. Help and advice with crops are given to native smallholders by Government, and employment in European enterprises on estates and in towns is offered to natives and other Asiatics when they are willing to take it. There is no unemployment here — rather, we cannot get enough labor.

Notice that the Chinese immigrants live on a far higher scale than their compatriots in China, and that by middle age they have saved enough to retire to China and die magnificently on. Observe also the fact that in every economic way, life here for an Asiatic is on a more affluent scale than is life in Japan.

Observe the personnel of our armed constabulary of 550 men and five British officers, and draw your own conclusions as to whether the 550 men are being forcibly subjugated by the five European officers. And do not forget to glance at the volunteer force of 180 British and Asiatic civilians, with men of three colors and four races serving side by side.

Now reflect for a moment on Japan's

Oriental beneficence to Asiatics as exemplified in Korea, Formosa, Manchuria, the Japanese Mandated Islands, and Japanese Occupied China.

III

We have gone through many war 'crises' here in North Borneo. When the shops are suddenly out of everything at the same time, tinned milk to corned beef, then I know that those who have 'information' have hastily stocked up, and we are having a crisis. When a boat is taken quietly off the Hong Kong run, and the captain writes a sad farewell letter that reads like a last will and testament, we are having a crisis. When my husband comes home and starts talking evacuation again for George and me, we are having a crisis.

There was always one secret hope for avoiding war in the East, but nobody was supposed to hope it; this was the possibility of immediate and definite aid from the United States in the Pacific. This possible aid was always mysteriously referred to as 'Mr. McCarthy may come!' There was a reason for this mysterious phrase, but that reason is also a secret.

It was a relief in such days to work, and I prepared privately for a possible invasion in many small ways. I had not been afraid, before George was born, for Harry or for myself, but now with a one-year-old baby to look after I was terribly pregnable to danger.

Harry and I went over it all in our minds again and again, whether George should go or should stay. In my imagination I faced the situation nightly: the risk of bombs from planes; the dangers of a harbor town which might be shelled by enemy ships; the danger of waiting too long and then making a forced evacuation under fire; and, worst threat of all, the possibility of invasion and a Japanese concentration camp for George. In this fashion, and almost to distraction on my part, we thought it out night

after night, and always to the same conclusion. I was unwilling to leave my husband, we did not know how to get George to the United States without me, and even if we could get him there, neither of us could face the idea of life here without him. So we decided that George should stay.

Two years ago when I had finished my book I wrote of my husband and myself, 'To journey together is happiness.' That was written in peacetime, when we rode the wave, and the crest flew high on the Sulu wind. Today we are living in war, and the conditions are those of war, but we still journey together, and we still know that in this is our happiness. But in deciding to keep George here we knew that we took on ourselves the responsibility of providing shelter and safety for him, for the European women and children had been warned that if they remained in this country in the face of possible war they must be responsible for their own safety and protection.

IV

One morning several months ago the radio reports said the Japanese had landed forces on Hainan Island off French Indo-China, and naval forces were moving up the Saigon River.

The next day found me measuring a great many tins and bottles to determine their exact sizes, then wrapping them carefully and fitting them into carrying boxes, packing them in with old towels and old sheets and pillows, old blouses and shorts and socks, and any old pieces of cloth that might come in handy for camp living. It was noticeable that nothing just ornamental went into those boxes. While I worked I was thinking to myself, and sometimes even talking out loud: —

'This is the last alarm! This time I must get everything in order; send home the papers and valuables; send home the unfinished manuscripts; send home the Chinese porcelain, the baby's pictures,

the best books — send home all the things that we say we cannot live without, and then live without them.'

And now Harry and George and I are getting ready to act for ourselves. We are preparing to take the one precautionary step that we three people can take, and still remain together in North Borneo. We are preparing to establish a jungle camp where George can be hidden in case of invasion.

Now with every tin of powdered milk that I pack in this box today I am making George more safe from danger, I am saving one child for the future, I am helping one little boy to grow up to be strong and well and sane and healthy and better able to live decently in a world that we hope may be decent. And that is enough. That is my war aim.

Close the boxes. Nail them down. There are food and clothing in them, and that is all a woman and a child in a jungle in wartime need.

V

'When the time comes for George to be evacuated to the jungle I'll not be able to leave Sandakan,' Harry said. 'You'll have to manage the trip alone.' It was with this eventuality in view that we planned and rehearsed the evacuation.

We left Sandakan in a clear warm dawn. How far we went, or where, or what was our manner of travel, it is not important to say. But in due time we came to a certain river in the jungle, and we were in small open boats like canoes then, and the rain began. It came down hard, shutting out everything else, and it was what we wanted, it was the final element in escape. It hid the sky from sight, and the Sulu Sea and the red sand cliffs and the tree-lined shores and the world outside were gone. There existed then only the slow-moving river at our feet, and the trees bending over us, and the mangrove forest opening before us.

There was no war there, no urgency and high purpose, no fierce patriotism and confused loyalty, no hatred and

desolation and destruction. There was no call on the heart for compassion, or on the tongue for eloquence, or on the nerves for strength; there was rest from emotion. I crouched low in the boat in the falling rain, and thanked God for the dumbness of trees.

Harry and I were together in the Forest Department number-one native *gobung*. She had the perilous balance and doubtful poise of a drunken tightrope walker with a closed umbrella. We liked her because she drew very little water and saved us from wading through the mud at the head of shallow tidal rivers, and where a heavier boat had to be abandoned.

A canoe followed us in which were just visible the rim of George's blue baby bath, the top bars of his crib, and a chamber pot with a pink and white lamb painted on it to stimulate art with evacuation. A third boat followed this, with sailcloth-covered contents hidden, and a fourth boat followed around the bend.

At home in Sandakan George is under wire every evening at sunset because of malarial mosquitoes, his dishes are washed in boiled water because of water-borne dysentery, his potatoes are imported from Hong Kong, his fruit is cold-storage, his vitamins come out of bottles, and his milk comes out of tins. His needs preëempt everything else in the household, and his commanding voice brings five people running. No mother's handbook takes up the problem of adapting the jungle to George.

The rain had almost stopped, and we drew close to the bank of the river to light cigarettes and wait until the boats with the luggage caught us up. I thought to myself, for a people who are at war there is only one point of view; that is the point of view that will most quickly bring an end to the war with themselves victorious. No scholastic debate and no philosophical indifference are possible. War is like pain: there is nothing that changes your indifference to it as quickly as experiencing it yourself.

BROWNSTONE ECLOGUES

BY CONRAD AIKEN

I

Morning: the golden lava pours to stone.
The flesh is built of light, the structure bone.
Steel, stone, and brick, the surface burns away,
cornice and smooth façade, the face of clay —

burned off, burned down to dust, by the blue sky,
powdered and burned: that magnifying eye
strips to forgotten earth all transient things;
under the subway the mud lives and sings;

the flint cries sharply, the reed lifts its head,
the yellow iris springs beneath your tread;
and the long asphalt, in a gauze of heat,
falls from the river like a winding-sheet.

Here water flows once more, and willows dream
with blossoms in their hair, the immortal stream
blest by the gods and nymphs; speech here is earth —
this is the granite where the blood had birth;

still living, fresh, as water lives, or stone,
the holy water to bless flesh and bone —
wakes under asphalt, as the morning wakes,
and once more into secret laughter breaks.

II

The alarm clocks tick in a thousand separate rooms,
tick and are wound for a thousand separate dooms;
all down both sides of North Infinity Street
you hear that contrapuntal pawnshop beat.

Hall bedrooms, attic rooms, where the gas-ring sings,
rooms in the basement, where the loud doorbell rings,
carpeted or bare, by the rail at the head of the stair,
the curtains drawn, a mirror, a bed, and a chair,

in midnight darkness, when the last footfall creaks,
in northeast rain, when the broken window leaks,
at dawn, to the sound of dishes, the kitchen steam,
at dusk, when the muted radio croons a dream,

there, amid combs and the waiting shoes and socks
and the bathrobes hung in closets, tick the clocks —
on the chest of drawers, on the table beside the bed,
facing the pillow, facing the recumbent head —

yes, from here to forever, from here to never,
one long sidereal curve of ticking fever:
all down both sides of North Infinity Street
you hear that contrapuntal pawnshop beat.

III

Pity the nameless, and the unknown, where,
bitter in heart, they wait on the stone-built stair,
bend to a wall, forgotten, the freezing wind
no bitterer than the suburbs of the mind;

who, from an iron porch, lift sightless eyes,
a moment, hopeless, to inflaming skies;
shrink from the light as quickly as from pain,
twist round a corner, bend to the wall again;

are to be seen leaning against a rail
by ornamental waters, where toy yachts sail;
glide down the granite steps, touch foot to float,
hate — and desire — the sunlight on the boat;

explore a sullen alley, where ash cans wait,
symbols of waste and want, at every gate;
emerge in sun to mingle with the crowd,
themselves most silent where the world most loud;

anonymous, furtive, shadows in shadow hidden;
who lurk at the garden's edge like guests unbidden;
stare through the leaves with hate, yet wait to listen
as bandstand music begins to rise and glisten;

the fierce, the solitary, divine of heart,
passionate, present, yet godlike and apart;
who, in the midst of traffic, see a vision;
and, on a park bench, come to a last decision.

RUSSIA: AN AMERICAN PROBLEM

BY WILLIAM HENRY CHAMBERLIN

THE question whether one could do business with Hitler was answered with all the final emphasis of a slammed door when the Fuehrer hurled his declaration of war against the United States. What are the prospects of coming to a satisfactory *modus vivendi* with Stalin, or with the Soviet régime in general, if Stalin should disappear from the political scene? For at the present time there are only two effective military powers on the continent of Europe, Germany and the Soviet Union.

Committed as we are to the defeat of the former, we are logically interested in the military success of the latter. And this interest is reciprocal. If it is a service to America when Soviet armies destroy German man power and matériel on the snow-covered plains of Russia, it is just as certainly a help to Russia when American tanks help to bring about an Axis defeat in Libya or when American airplanes and submarines strike at Japanese warships and transports in the South Pacific.

The sense of national interest has almost always proved stronger than ideological conflicts. A Most Christian King of France allied himself with the Sultan of Turkey against his Christian enemy, the Emperor of Germany. The French Cardinal Richelieu supported Protestant states and principalities as part of his policy of creating a European balance of power which would be favorable to France. And this at a time when men felt strongly enough about religion to kill their fellow men for differences of faith.

Even before America had become a full belligerent the interest in a Russian victory had found expression in the extension of a billion dollar lease-lend credit to the Soviet Government — a step which would have been unthinkable before June 22. The American stake in Soviet military success has greatly increased since December 7. Should Hitler's reverses in Russia assume the proportions of a Napoleonic disaster, the beginning of the end of a nightmare that has long hung over the civilized world might be in sight. And it is only from Soviet Far Eastern bases, especially from Vladivostok, that there is a favorable prospect of dealing heavy blows to the industrial heart of Japan in any near future.

If one looks at the situation more pessimistically, what prospect would face the Anglo-Saxon powers if Russia should collapse or change sides? There would be, at least temporarily, a very grave preponderance of enemy land and air power. Not only would the prospect of freeing Europe from Hitler be indefinitely postponed; the security of many links in the chain of lands and bases that now help to assure Anglo-American maritime superiority would be endangered. The British Isles would face the greatest peril since the fall of France.

So, barring an unpredictable and unfavorable change in Stalin's policy, Soviet-American military coöperation can be taken for granted until the achievement of the common goal: the downfall of Hitler. American aid to a fighting Russia

will be unstinted and will be limited only by such bottlenecks as shipping and the availability of routes of supply and by such technical considerations as whether American tanks and airplanes can render most effective service in Russia, at Suez, or at Singapore.

I

Can this coöperation in war, which seems to be historically predestined under present circumstances, be prolonged into the period of peace that will some day follow the war?

The answer to this question is of enormous significance for world tranquility and stability. For, if one assumes a crushing defeat of the Berlin-Rome-Tokyo combination, the Soviet Union will rank with the United States and the British Empire as one of the three surviving great powers. China is still too undeveloped industrially and militarily to fall within this category.

Russia and the United States are far and away the most populous large countries with a predominantly white population. There are about 170,000,000 people in the Soviet Union, a little over 130,000,000 in the United States. The Soviet Union is about two and a half times as large as the continental area of the United States, and Soviet orators like to boast that their country embraces one sixth of the land surface of the globe. (A cantankerous and chronically skeptical American correspondent in Moscow once carried out some statistical research and demonstrated that one seventh was closer to the fact than one sixth.) In any comparison of size, however, one must discount the huge regions of Northern Siberia and Northern Russia which are comparable to Northern Canada in barrenness and which can never support a large population.

Similar in their vast dimensions, Russia and the United States have followed utterly divergent lines of development. Unlimited and unquestioned state power is as characteristic of Russia, whether

under the Tsars or under the Communists, as individual liberty and initiative are of the United States. If the typical figure in America's century of westward expansion and settlement was the pioneer frontiersman, going where he chose, Russia's settlers of new territory in the East often went under compulsion and sometimes literally in chains.

The Tsarist régime sent considerable numbers of political and criminal prisoners to Siberia. The Soviets have carried out huge forced transplantations of groups that were regarded as undesirable for political, racial, and economic reasons. Among these groups were the kulaks, or well-to-do peasants, Koreans from the Far East, Finns from the neighborhood of Leningrad, recalcitrant tribesmen from Central Asia, and most recently Germans from their homes on the Volga. This is only one illustration of how the pressure of state authority has been stronger in Russia, as it has been weaker in the United States, than in almost any large country. Contrasted national psychologies are the natural outgrowth of such strongly different political systems.

America and Russia have never understood each other well and have experienced perhaps less physical contact than almost any other great powers. Americans and Russians have fought each other only once, during the half-hearted intervention in the Archangel and Vladivostok regions which was soon abandoned as futile.

Most Americans disapproved of many characteristics of the Tsarist régime: of the autocracy, of the stern treatment of political prisoners, of the pogroms against the Jews. But Imperial Russia never clashed seriously with American interests. Russia, like Japan, had little use for the American idea of the 'Open Door' in its sphere of influence in Manchuria. And Russia joined with Japan in rejecting Secretary of State Philander C. Knox's idea that the Manchurian railways should be internationalized.

But there were never American-Russian issues that aroused high blood pressure or talk of war in either country. A landlocked power with negligible naval strength, Russia could not threaten the security of the Western Hemisphere. The regions where Tsarist imperialism was active — Manchuria, Mongolia, Central Asia, Persia, and the Balkans — were not parts of the world in which America felt any vital concern.

Much the same situation continued to prevail after the Romanovs had been replaced by the Soviets. Most Americans (an ardent but small minority of Communist sympathizers dissenting) still disapproved of the Russian governmental system. They did not like what they heard about persecution of religion, 'purges' and executions and mass deportations without trial, the squalor of everyday Soviet life. But the Soviet Republic, like the autocracy, offered no threat to American national security.

There was, however, one aspect of the Soviet system that raised a problem that had not existed under the Tsars. And it is on the solution of this problem that the existence of normal American-Soviet relations after the end of the war largely depends.

Tsarist Russia was a static traditionalist autocracy. It made no effort to convert Americans, or anyone else, to the idea that Tsarism would be a good form of government for the whole world. It indulged in its full share of international intrigue and espionage, but it maintained no corps of agents aiming to promote a particular type of social revolution in other lands.

The Bolshevik Revolution, on the other hand, was conceived by Lenin and by all its leaders in the beginning as the first act in an international revolt against the capitalist system. The Communist International, the world association of Communist Parties which has always maintained its headquarters in Moscow, grandiloquently described itself as 'the general staff of the world revolution.'

Given the centralized, totalitarian character of the Soviet State, it has always been idle hairsplitting to contend that the Communist International is independent of the Soviet Government. No doubt there is and has been some technical separation of the functions of these two organizations. But every important decision of the Communist International, like every important decision of the Soviet Government, could only be taken with the approval and sanction of Stalin and his associates in the Political Bureau, the highest steering committee of the ruling Communist Party. Between the Soviet Government and the Communist International there has always been the close bond of a completely interlocking directorate. There has never been an instance when the foreign parties of the International did not follow, in the most slavish way, the political line prescribed by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Individuals and groups have protested against this Muscovite domination of the international Communist movement. But these individuals and groups have been swiftly excommunicated and expelled from their respective parties.

Now a situation where a group of citizens of one country takes orders blindly and unconditionally from the government of another power is at best unhealthy and not conducive to smooth international relations. In a time of great crisis such a situation may become an intolerable threat to national security. Take the recent example of the fall of France. Most comment on the internal causes of this catastrophe has concentrated on the sins of the well-to-do 'appeasers' and has overlooked the rôle of the Communists in undermining French morale.

Yet the record in this case is clear and indisputable. Until August 23, the French Communists did everything in their power to push their country into war. When war was imminent, after it had actually begun, they abruptly

swung over to a policy of all-out defeatism. In both rôles, as war agitators and as defeatists, they were acting not as Frenchmen, but as agents of Moscow. The sole reason for their change of attitude was the Stalin-Hitler pact. Since June 22, 1941, Communists in France, as in other countries, have executed a new about-face. Many of them have perished at the hands of German firing squads. But, however much one may respect them for their devotion to their cause, history has little pardon for groups that place the interests of a foreign power ahead of those of their own country.

In France, where the Communists were the third strongest party in the Chamber of Deputies, where they attracted a large following among the industrial workers, their 'Russia First' policy was a national disaster. In the United States, Communism has been a nuisance rather than a menace. It has gained no appreciable mass support, although the Communists, because of their solidarity and their capacity for intrigue, have acquired an influence in some trade-unions, professional groups, and 'innocents' organizations' that is out of all proportion to their actual numbers.

Yet America too would have become acutely conscious of the Communist problem if Hitler had pressed his campaign against the British Empire instead of attacking Russia — a step that automatically placed the Communists in the front ranks of America's interventionists. Had there been no attack on Russia, Communist-inspired strikes and anti-war demonstrations would have become increasingly numerous.

II

It is this question of Soviet support of revolutionary movements in other countries that is likely to prove the touchstone of future American-Soviet relations. If, out of the stupendous ordeal of the present war, there emerges a

clearly nationalist Russia, whether under Stalin or some other leader, a Russia that is willing to forswear the mirage of world revolution, to scrap the machinery of subversive intrigue and propaganda that is represented by the Communist International, to content itself with peaceful development within its very wide and generous ethnographic frontiers — then there would seem to be no obstacle to the maintenance of normal American-Soviet relations. Indeed, some kind of *modus vivendi* between Washington and Moscow may well prove to be an essential prerequisite of post-war world stability.

The cordiality of American feeling toward Russia would, of course, be influenced by the treatment of religion, by Soviet administrative methods, by the question whether 'habeas corpus' or 'habeas cadaver' would be more characteristic of Soviet jurisprudence. But, especially after the strain of an exhausting war, there would be no impulse in America to exercise pressure or dictation in Soviet internal affairs. There would be general acceptance of the fact that only the Russian people themselves could overcome and cure the defects of their own political and economic system.

There are signs that a nationalist Russia may be in the making. For years before the beginning of the war, Stalin, whose personal power had become steadily more unlimited and more unchallenged, had been visibly slipping the bonds of strict Communist ideology. Tsars like Peter the Great and Ivan the Terrible (there are similarities to both in Stalin's own character) were publicly exalted instead of being reviled. The sharpest edge of the terror was turned against veteran Communists with a cosmopolitan background, men who still clung to the international revolutionary ideas of Marx and Lenin. The restoration of discipline and conventional methods in education, the discouragement of divorce, the growth of a stabilized inequality in wages and salaries — all

these are the familiar symptoms of a revolutionary volcano that has spent its force.

Since the beginning of the war, Soviet propaganda has been nationalist, rather than Marxist, in character. The Pan-Slav ideal, cherished by Russian conservatives in the nineteenth century, has been revived. Stalin's chances of victory, as he knows very well, are linked up not with any proletarian uprising but with the amount and effectiveness of the help he may obtain from the non-revolutionary governments of Great Britain and the United States. This consideration is bound to influence Soviet policy in a moderate direction during the war.

And after the end of hostilities Russia will be a wrecked, desolate country, many of its largest cities gutted, much of its industry destroyed, tens of millions of its people uprooted and scattered. Over and above this there will be a staggering toll of casualties, even for a country of Russia's vast man power and traditional resilience in recovering from catastrophes which would have swamped a less tough and stoical people. America at that time will certainly be the largest if not the only remaining reservoir of reconstruction supplies.

One suspects that, as soon as the sense of imminent peril has passed, Americans will repudiate the rôle of playing Santa Claus to the entire anti-Axis world. But, if a grave unemployment crisis is to be averted, foreign as well as domestic markets must be sought. Outright subsidies to Russia would cease. But a clearinghouse system of exchange of American food, machinery, and railway equipment for Russian manganese, furs, gold, and other products might be worked out to the advantage of both countries. As Russia, in the beginning, would be the principal gainer from this process, Soviet policy would scarcely be directed along anti-American lines.

So there is a fair probability that, in

striking contrast to the situation after the last war, Russia may emerge from this conflict with conservative rather than revolutionary objectives in foreign policy. One cannot, however, rule out the possibility that European post-war conditions, as much as Stalin's own design, will rekindle the flame of social revolt. There is no revolutionary dynamo comparable in its effectiveness to large-scale war.

If the Nazi régime should collapse suddenly, which some observers regard as a possibility, most of Europe would become a turbulent vacuum, hungry, cold, embittered, and leaderless. Russia would become the sole military power of any strength on the Continent. Should the old crusading fervor of the first years of the Bolshevik Revolution revive, should Stalin's legions sweep on to the Danube, to the Rhine, to the Seine, to the Tiber, all blueprints for a democratic reconstruction of Europe and the world might as well be thrown into the wastebasket.

A Stalin-dominated Europe, from the standpoint of American national interest, would possess only one advantage over Hitler's New Order. It would be less efficient, and therefore less of a military threat. But the writ of the Four Freedoms would certainly not run in a Europe that was ruled from Moscow. And many of those difficulties in the fields of trade and propaganda that are widely foreseen in the event of a consolidation of Nazi power would be just as perplexing if the Russian colossus should bestride all Europe and a large part of Asia.

So the prospect of future permanent coöperation between America and Russia depends mainly on the character and mentality and foreign political aims of the Russian régime that emerges from the present ordeal by battle, the greatest in Russia's history. It also depends on the kind of Europe that is being forged in the crucible of Nazi domination and exploitation.

III

What of the more immediate problem of American military and economic aid to the Soviet régime? What are the results, the lessons, and the prospects of the Soviet-German war?

The principal surprise of this war has been the tenacity and relative effectiveness of Soviet resistance. Hitler's longest previous land campaign had lasted six weeks. More than five months have passed since the invasion was launched, and Soviet armies not only are in the field, but have assumed the offensive with success. Our knowledge of the Soviet-German war, mainly limited to the conflicting propagandist claims of the two sides, meagrely supplemented by the impressions of correspondents on the few conducted fleeting visits to the front that have been permitted, is woefully imperfect. But I think it is possible to discern four main causes of the Soviet endurance: —

(1) The Soviet system of government by unlimited propaganda, plus unlimited terror, accompanied by intensive indoctrination of the younger generation, very like the Nazi system, has produced a similar type of youth, mentally and physically tough, hardboiled, cocksure, free from doubt, firmly attached to the new régime, with few exceptions. To this Soviet or Communist patriotism of the youth add the nationalist feeling that prompts many non-Communist Russians to fight a foreign invader, and one has an explanation of Russian morale.

(2) The leaders of the Red Army, unlike the British and French generals before the outbreak of the war, were not attached to the obsolete tactical precedents of 1914–1918. Russia's military chieftains have always thought in terms of a war of machines. And Stalin launched a 'guns instead of butter' campaign with the inauguration of the first Five-Year Plan, long before Hitler came into power.

(3) The Soviet political and economic

system, emphatically not calculated to produce individual comfort or a high standard of living, is well adapted to war needs. It is the system of total war, with the State disposing of all the human and material resources of the country, able to wreck factories and farms, to make wholesale forcible shifts of population, to impose the utmost sacrifices. The Soviet State does not consider the hankering of business men for profits. The last business man has long been liquidated. Neither does it have to worry about strikes in defense industries, for the Soviet trade-union organization, like the Nazi Labor Front, is just one of the many branch offices of the omnipotent State.

(4) The enormous expanse of the Soviet Union, the greatest land mass under a single sovereignty in the world, forty times the size of France, is an effective protection against blitzkrieg methods. The Soviet armies can sustain losses and carry out retreats that would be fatal and final in one of the comparatively small countries of Western or Central Europe. There are always more men to call on, there is always more space in which to retreat, to re-form, to counter-attack.

With all recognition of these factors in Soviet resistance, it would be unwise wishful thinking to assume, on the basis of the present military situation, that the Soviet Union is certain to defeat Germany. It would be useful, in order to obtain a fair perspective on the results of Hitler's Russian campaign, to compare the line which the German armies held after five months of fighting and the line which they held after three years of war in 1917. The modern German armies have overrun the whole of Ukraina, one of the most productive regions of the Soviet Union, with a population of thirty-five millions. The German armies of 1917 had not even reached the border of Ukraina. Nor had the Kaiser's armies come close to Moscow and Lenin-grad.

Probably half of the Soviet industrial output has been paralyzed. This does not mean that half of the Soviet factories are in the hands of the Germans; for much industrial property has been destroyed, some has been evacuated, and the factories of the Leningrad and Moscow industrial regions have been crippled for lack of regular supplies of raw material. But there has certainly been a depletion of Soviet industrial production far exceeding the value of supplies that have reached Russia from abroad or are likely to arrive in any near future.

The true account of the Soviet-German struggle is far and away the biggest unwritten story of World War II. It is unwritten because it could not be written with any degree of assurance for lack of firsthand information. Neither Germans nor Russians have afforded foreign correspondents more than fleeting glimpses of the front. Secretary Stimson has publicly complained that American official military observers have been given scanty facilities in Russia.

It has been possible to follow with reasonable accuracy the shifting lines of the front. But on the far more important questions of comparative losses of men and tanks and airplanes, of the reserves which are still available to the two sides, one can only grope in a fog of rumor and uncertain speculation.

Until the end of November the tradition of German invincibility in land fighting had not been broken, although the timetable of Hitler's advance had been much slower than many observers had anticipated. Soviet resistance at some pivotal points, at Smolensk, at Kiev, at Odessa, had been stubborn and prolonged. There had been occasional local Russian counter-offensives. But when the Germans occupied a large city it always remained in their hands. Several major battles, in the Minsk-Bialystok area during the first weeks of the war, around Kiev in September, in the neighborhood of Briansk and Vyazma in October, had ended disastrously for the

Russians and must have been costly in men and matériel. After five months of fighting, Hitler's forces had conquered a good deal more Russian territory than the Kaiser's forces had occupied during the three years of fighting from 1914 until 1917. Almost the whole of Ukraina, for instance, had been overrun, and the German lines were close to Moscow and to Leningrad.

The first sign of a turn in the tide was the recapture late in November of Rostov, a large town on the River Don which was the gateway to the Caucasus. One setback of this kind might have been attributed to the use of inadequately supported armored units in the taking of Rostov. But after the first week of December the initiative on both the Moscow and the Leningrad fronts passed into the hands of the Russians. Towns of unmistakable strategic value, Kalinin, Tikhvin, Volokolamsk, Klin, figured in Soviet claims which were not disputed by the Germans. Hitler spectacularly dropped his commander in chief, Von Brauchitsch.

American public opinion, even in normal times, is likely to run to extremes; and this tendency is accentuated under the strain of war. Russia was hastily written off as doomed to immediate and crushing defeat when Hitler launched his offensive last summer. As soon as the Germans began to retreat on a wide front, headlines proclaimed a rout, a disaster of Napoleonic proportions. That the Russians have won important victories is obvious. They have apparently warded off the threat to their most important sources of oil supply. They have relieved the pressure on their two largest cities.

But there was no sure indication during the first weeks of the Russian offensive that the German armies were being annihilated or that they are disintegrating and melting away like the Grande Armée of Napoleon. The German retreat was slower than several phases of the Russian retreat that preceded the counter-offensive.

Both the proportions and the causes of the Russian success will become clearer with the passing of time. The Germans quite conceivably overextended their lines of supply and communication. Hitler may well have forced the period of active fighting, against the advice of some of his experienced generals, into a winter season to which the Germans and their Italian and Rumanian auxiliaries are less accustomed than are the Russians. The arrival of fresh mechanized units, drawn from the crack Far Eastern Army, may have tipped the balance. This would account for Soviet unwillingness to begin hostilities against Japan at this time.

One cannot fairly criticize a country that has stood up to such battering as Russia has endured for declining to take on a two-front war. But the defeat of Japan is quite as much in the national interest of Russia as it is of the United States. Vladivostok is more vulnerable to the Japanese arms than is San Francisco. Should Japan achieve its maximum aims in the South, the reduction of Singapore and the Netherlands Indies, Russia would scarcely be spared an attack. One may therefore hope that complete unity of effort on the part of the anti-Axis coalition will be attained in the Orient, as in other fields of action, that the Soviet Union will not overlook any reasonable chance of striking effectively at Japan while its Navy, Air Force, and picked Army units are heavily engaged thousands of miles away from the Siberian-Manchurian frontier.

There is another possible explanation of the German retreat that cannot be dismissed. It may have been a planned move, designed to shorten lines in Russia for a defensive stand during the winter while troops withdrawn from the Soviet Union are used for a major offensive in the Eastern or Western Mediterranean, or even for a desperate onslaught against the British Isles. The Nazis are good showmen. They would be quite capable of inspiring exaggerated rumors of the

proportions of their defeat, of dissensions in their own ranks, as part of the game of masking the preparation of a new offensive. They employed similar tactics, not without success, in order to promote a false sense of security before the drive into the Low Countries and France in 1940.

The American popular tendency to run to extremes is reflected not only in the understandable desire to give Russia the breaks in the headlines, but in a much more questionable tendency to soft-pedal any criticism of Stalin and his régime. One frequently encounters the argument that the sturdy character of the Soviet resistance automatically refutes all testimony about the negative features of Communist dictatorship.

Here certainly some clear thinking is called for. If Japan had been won over to the Allied side in this war, as in the last one, it would have been welcome politically. But it would have given no reason to Americans to endorse Emperor-worship, or to rewrite the historical facts about the seizure of Manchuria or the sack of Nanking. If Mussolini had changed sides it would have been a political and military benefit. But it would not have altered the fate of Mateotti and men like him in Italy.

Precisely the same line of reasoning applies, or should apply, to the Soviet Union. It is an ally for reasons of mutual interest so long as it fights our enemies. Until and unless its system of government is drastically changed it can never be the ideological partner of a free America.

In the difficult and ticklish business of dealing with a profoundly secretive dictatorship, American policy should be guided by one consideration alone: a hard-headed consideration of American national interest. It should not be forgotten that Stalin's original policy in relation to the war was to promote its outbreak by signing his pact with Hitler, then to sit back and hope that the 'bourgeois' world would destroy itself,

with the Soviet Union gathering the revolutionary spoils at the end. His participation in the war against Hitler was distinctly Hitler's decision, not his own.

American support for the policy of aid to Russia will be more wholehearted if this policy is based squarely on considerations of American national interest in defeating Hitler and not cluttered up with efforts to whitewash or redwash Stalin or to falsify the historical record of the Soviet régime. It is certainly unfortunate, for instance, that President Roosevelt, perhaps speaking hastily, conveyed an impression that religious freedom of the American type exists in Russia. Anyone familiar with Soviet conditions knows that persecution of all forms of religion has gone further there than anywhere in the world, that to be a priest or minister is to follow one of the most dangerous professions, that great numbers of churches have been arbitra-

rily closed, and that those which remain are denied any opportunity to carry on social, charitable, or educational work. We are helping Stalin because he is fighting Hitler, not because he is a champion of religious freedom.

One must also deprecate efforts to prettify Stalin, whose internal homicide record is even longer than Hitler's, as a character, or to assume, without any evidence, that all the numerous individuals he put to death, with and without trial, were traitors and 'fifth columnists.'

Our government officials and leaders of public opinion will be well advised to leave the glorification of Stalin and the Soviet régime in the zealous hands of the Communists and the Dean of Canterbury, and to base the policy of coöperation with the Soviet Union on the one ground that will command the support of the majority of the American people: that it is a means to the downfall of Hitler.

NEWSPAPERS ON GUARD

BY GERALD W. JOHNSON

I

WHEN the President referred, in his first war speech, to the tremendous responsibility resting upon radio and the press, he linked them in a fashion that indicated his belief that the same responsibility rests upon them both. From the standpoint of the Commander in Chief that is true enough. The responsibility the Commander in Chief naturally, and properly, had in mind is the responsibility of affording neither aid and comfort to the enemy by revealing military secrets, nor hindrance and discomfort to the population by the propagation of

false rumors. This responsibility does rest upon all disseminators of news, radio and press included.

But the press carries further responsibilities that radio shares only to a slight degree, if at all; and the peculiar character of this war has made them peculiarly onerous. The President, as Commander in Chief, instructed the newspapers as to what they must not do, and quit with that. The fact remains, however, that the American press is facing not merely the usual prohibitions that always go into force with the outbreak of hostilities, but

positive duties unlike those laid upon it in any previous war; duties whose successful discharge presents formidable difficulties that will tax not only the skill, but also the ingenuity and, above all, the judgment of the profession as they have never been taxed before.

On the other hand, the press is relieved, in this war, of one responsibility it has carried in all other wars. That is the responsibility of speed. The first news no longer comes to the public from the newspapers. That reporting has been taken over by the radio, which is so much better equipped for the purpose that it is idle for the press to think of trying to compete. Newspapermen are sometimes inclined to regret, even to resent this; but it may be argued very plausibly that they are really being relieved of a handicap. Breakneck speed does not make for good journalism. Release from the necessity of straining for speed should have a tendency to improve the quality of the newspapers.

That is one condition the press has not faced before. Another is the almost complete absence of neutrals in this struggle. At this writing Switzerland and Sweden still exist precariously as technical neutrals, but they both exist on sufferance, and their neutral status will certainly be abolished the moment Germany decides that she loses, rather than gains, by its continuance. All good news writers strive for objectivity, and the ablest, after years of training, attain it to a remarkable degree. But the best reporter in the world, with many years of rigorous training behind him, will not write from Berlin precisely as he writes from Bern when Germany is at war and Switzerland is neutral. That is true regardless of censorship, and it is true because he will not think in Berlin precisely as he thinks in Bern. If there were no censor, if no one so much as mentioned his work to him, still the mere presence around him of a population under the intense physical and psychic strain of war would inevitably have an

effect on his mental processes, and that effect would be reflected in what he wrote.

Moreover, fine reporting is dependent upon the reporter's background to a greater extent than most nonprofessionals realize. The correspondent in a belligerent capital is necessarily poorly informed about what is going on in the rest of the world, and for that reason he is constantly in danger of misinterpreting the significance of what goes on under his eyes.

A reporter is not a transcriber; reporting is a selective process. Even the *New York Times*, most voluminous newspaper in the world, omits vastly more news than it presents; how much judgment then must a foreign correspondent, restricted to a few hundred words, exercise in picking out the really important from the multitudinous events of the day! Yet the importance of an event may be affected tremendously by what is occurring elsewhere, and the reporter without information may — indeed, almost surely will — misjudge its significance. In time of war every American news editor knows that his cables from the various capitals can never be judged alone, but must be carefully checked and balanced against each other to give him even a reasonable approximation of the truth. He usually finds the reports from neutral countries more enlightening than any others — sometimes as much for what they omit as for what they include.

II

Henceforth American newspapers must proceed without the advantage of a neutral filter, except for such use, steadily narrowing, as may be made of Bern and Stockholm. This can hardly fail to exert a damaging influence upon the quality of the news presented to American readers; but it will have another effect that is probably more important because it may be more damaging in the

long run — the effect upon conscientious newspapermen themselves.

I know that the statement will be received with incredulity, but it is true that every reputable American newspaper is extremely reluctant to attack any man or any individual until it is sure of its facts. Frequently some of the facts are of such a nature, or have been learned in such a way, that their publication is impossible; nevertheless, the newspaper knows them before it opens fire. The energy and care that are spent upon investigation and verification before a responsible American newspaper prints a derogatory statement would astound a good many law offices. Inaccuracy is humiliating, even if no question of libel is involved. It is almost a matter of instinct, therefore, at least in the good shops, to be silent when you are not sure.

Now that the war has spread into every corner of the earth, and the censors are omnipresent, it will become harder and harder always to be sure. The inevitable result will be to make the press hesitant and slow in its judgments.

This is not desirable at any time, and it is doubly undesirable in time of war. Factious and obstructive criticism at such a time is criminal, to be sure; but well-founded criticism is a contribution to the safety of the nation and one of the most important duties that devolve upon the press.

For it is of the very nature of war to stir up all the evil in the dark depths of society.

This has no reference whatever to the character of the present administration at Washington. I care not what sort of administration may be in power, the same thing will happen. Since time began the vultures have followed the battle, and were Arthur the President, — I mean the Briton, not Chester A., — supported by a Cabinet consisting of ten Galahads, nevertheless within ninety days after the outbreak of war Washington would be infested with rascals of every stripe. Nor is that all of the pic-

ture, or by any means the worst of it. Unless this war differs from every other ever fought, there will be incompetence and stupidity in high places, which favoritism will endeavor to conceal. Against this sort of thing it is the duty of the press to be vigilant. But it is hard to be vigilant when one is hesitant and uncertain.

By way of illustration let us consider one possibility that did not develop. Within two hours of the first report of the attack on Pearl Harbor every newspaperman in the country knew there was something wrong. The information given the press before the war was that, with the defenses properly manned, the harbor itself could not be reached. But it was reached. It was obvious, therefore, either that the press had been misinformed — and had misinformed the public — or that the defenses had not been properly manned.

In this instance, Washington acted swiftly and resolutely. Before the newspapers had time to do more than mutter, the Secretary of the Navy was on his way to the scene; and within forty-eight hours of his report the three ranking officers in the region were yanked out of their commands and put under the magnifying glass. There was, therefore, no occasion for the press to do anything beyond reporting the news.

But suppose Washington had not acted? Suppose the newspapers had had reason to believe that Washington was not going to act because one, or all, of the officers involved had friends in high places who were using political influence to prevent any really ruthless investigation? It did not happen in this case; but such things have happened in the past and, unless we are lucky beyond all precedent, such things will happen again. In that event it would be the plain duty of the press to cry aloud and spare not. This would involve publishing information of value to the enemy — for what could be more valuable to the enemy than to be informed, truthfully, that we

had a jackass in command? Yet to let the enemy know such a fact is not as dangerous as to keep the country from knowing it.

I have chosen the Pearl Harbor incident, I repeat, for the very reason that the situation the newspapers dread did not develop in that connection — and what a relief it was to conscientious newspapermen when they realized that the government would need no prodding! But it is beyond belief that this will always be true.

III

There is another factor that will operate in restraint of alert and vigorous criticism — namely, the unfortunate position of most of the larger newspapers in relation to the present administration. In 1940 Mr. Roosevelt was opposed by a majority of the big-city press. It may be that this will make them all the more anxious to expose his shortcomings as the war progresses, but I doubt that it will work that way in most instances. Probably there are a few newspaper proprietors so poisoned by hatred of the man that they are capable of sacrificing the interest of the country to indulge their hatred; but they are not many, and they are regarded by their better-poised colleagues as repulsive. I am inclined to believe that most of the men who have fought Mr. Roosevelt in time of peace will now be inclined to lean backward in their desire not to be classed with those who are capable of carrying partisan disputes into this gravest of national emergencies. Their criticism will be less aggressive, not more so, because of their consciousness that they are criticizing a man whom they dislike on grounds having no connection with the war.

But what of the isolationist press? Well, where its isolationism is sincere, and not adopted simply because the President was non-isolationist, it has been offered the means of making a

graceful exit from its position. The genuine isolationist opposed intervention in a war being fought on foreign soil. No reputable American newspaper has ever suggested that we should yield an inch of our own territory, nor am I aware that any has opposed severe chastisement of an invader, although that necessarily involves chasing him back into his own premises and finishing him off there. Now that Japan has started it, no newspaper need feel, nor is any likely to feel, that previous isolationism is a bar to insisting that the United States finish the war; and if that means carrying the fight into Africa (which seems probable enough), nevertheless we must finish it.

The press, like every other element of our national life, owes to the Mikado the valuable gift of unity. The treachery of the attack, made at the very hour when so-called peacemakers were in conversation with the American Secretary of State, has absolved all consciences, and Japan is destined to learn the important truth that if you are going to stab a man in the back, failure to reach a vital organ is worse than a crime — it is a blunder. Unsuccessful or even half-successful treachery is idiotic, for it confers upon your opponent the inestimable advantage of righteous wrath.

IV

I have considered, so far, only the situation of honest newspapers. I am convinced that it is hardly worth while to consider any others, but it would be fatuous to deny that they exist. The reptile press falls into two classes — that part owned by Hitler and that part owned by megalomaniacs.

It may be assumed as a matter of course that agents of the Axis powers have endeavored to purchase some American newspapers, and it is highly probable they have succeeded. It is not likely, however, that this is of much importance, for the simple reason that

any newspaper Hitler could buy must have been a rather scurvy paper beforehand, with small circulation and smaller influence. It is improbable that these gutter rags will do much damage before they are exposed.

More trouble may be caused by newspapers that happen to be under the control of men with an insane estimate of their own importance. There are such men in American journalism—not many, but enough to constitute a considerable nuisance in time of war. The ballooning conceit of these fellows can be pricked by one force only, and that is the force of public opinion. Some may be rash enough to expose themselves to action by the military authorities and wind up in Leavenworth prison; but in general the one defense against them is the common sense of their readers. When their readers desert, they will be done for.

But the Benedict Arnolds and the Mad Mullahs combined constitute only a small part of the American press. The question of importance is what the honest and patriotic papers are going to do.

V

At first the chances are that they will do rather less than their duty, not for any lack of energy and sincerity but because, like all Americans, they are confused and uncertain. Some of the boys like to speak oracularly of their prescience, and by this time some have doubtless convinced themselves that they knew the Japanese attack was inevitable and almost the day and hour when it was bound to come. But they are talking through their hats. On Sunday, December 7, 1941, American newspapermen were surprised as completely as their fellow countrymen, including those at Pearl Harbor.

Americans spent more than twenty years talking themselves into the conviction that it was high and holy patriotism, instead of blind and stupid selfish-

ness, that made us run out on civilization in 1919. The American press led the gabble, and in the end the American press talked itself almost entirely out of contact with the realities of international politics. The Cloud-Cuckoo-Land in which we all lived was to a large extent the creation of the press, and nobody believed in it more firmly than some sections of the press. So the 'murder of a beautiful theory by a gang of brutal facts' staggered us who deal with the news as it staggered everyone else. It is going to take us some time to collect our scattered wits and begin to function again with any certainty and precision. Until we do so, we are likely to make rather indifferent sentinels upon the watchtower.

But when the newspapers have recovered from the initial shock they will find a new, unfamiliar, and rather distasteful task before them in adjusting themselves to working under governmental censorship. In this endeavor much will depend upon the censorship. It began very well. The appointment of Mr. Byron Price as director was approved by the press, for he is admittedly one of the ablest newspapermen in the country. But Mr. Price, after all, is not the final authority. There are powers behind him, and it is conceivable that these may force him sometimes to follow courses that his own judgment does not altogether approve.

The cheaper sort of politicians—including politicians in the armed forces—will certainly exhaust every resource their ingenuity can suggest to employ the censorship, not to keep the enemy ignorant of our military dispositions, but to keep the country ignorant of the stupidities and worse perpetrated by incompetent or dishonest officials. Sometimes they will succeed. We may as well face that depressing fact in the beginning. No war was ever fought, and doubtless none ever will be fought, without the enrichment of some rascals, the sanctification of some villains, and

the laudation of some fools. The restriction of these melancholy incidents to the irreducible minimum should be the limit of our hopes; and that limit is likely to be approached in such measure as the censorship is prevented from becoming the protection of the brainless and the conscienceless.

We are fortunate in having before us the example of the British, who, after some fumbling in the early stages, seem to have worked out a reasonably efficient system of suppressing indiscretion without suppressing criticism. It must be borne in mind, however, that Mr. Price faces certain difficulties from which the British censor is free. News gathering is much more highly centralized in Great Britain than it is in this country. Modern communication has reduced the effect, but not abolished the existence, of distance; no one American city can blanket the country with its newspapers as London blankets England. More than that, British newspapers, by reason of their geographical proximity to the Continent, have always had a much more intimate understanding of the policies of the Foreign Office than most American newspapers have of those of the State Department.

Nevertheless, the idea that the American press will be in constant collision with the censorship is fantastic. In 1917 we had remarkably little trouble, although the censorship of the press was on a voluntary basis. As a matter of fact, in 1941 the newspapers, time after time, held up news items which they were under no compulsion to delay, until the proper government authorities could be consulted.

While it is practically certain that there will be an occasional slip, we may feel confident that the press will not fail to assume its full responsibility as regards the publication of news that may be of military value to the enemy. The serious question concerns its assumption of responsibility for its other function, that of keeping the American people informed, not as to military dispositions, but as to the honesty, intelligence, and efficiency of their government. Efforts will be made to employ the censorship for preventing the discharge of that function. Efforts will be made to employ to the same end political pressure, economic pressure, patriotic fervor, and the unfamiliarity of the situation.

The defeat of these efforts will demand the exercise of skill in a high degree, energy, courage, and, above all, cool, balanced judgment. To assert that the press will always measure up to standards so high would be little short of imbecile. There will be failures. There must be failures. The job is simply too difficult for humanity to do it perfectly. But the failures in detail will not add up to failure in the large. By degrees the press will adjust itself; slipping here, and sliding there, it will nevertheless keep its footing in the main and thread its way through this unfamiliar labyrinth at a pace that will improve with the passage of time.

Being an American newspaperman in the months immediately ahead is going to be more difficult than ever before in this generation, but it is also going to be more interesting; and in the end, I have faith to believe, the coming epoch will reflect credit on the craft.

THE NOVELIST IN WAR

BY HOWARD SPRING

I

SIX months before the war broke out I bought this house on the water's edge, looking northeast up the two miles of the Carrick Roads. It was then my intention to leave London for good. The railroad company calls our region the Cornish Riviera, but that year there was precious little Riviera about it. I was writing a novel called *Fame Is the Spur*, and when the war came I left London in order to finish it here in peace. There was emotional impetus enough to carry me on, and the work was ended by January 1940.

Now, I thought, I could get on with something new. I had in my mind three themes for long novels and a theme for a tale that would need only a couple of hundred pages in the telling. I would rest now, I said to myself, for a few months after the long labor of *Fame Is the Spur*. Then in the summer months I would easily knock out the little tale: it would be a sort of holiday task: and with the coming of the next winter I would take another long novel in hand. Nearly eighteen months have passed since then, months loaded with destiny, heavy with hopes and fears, with few triumphs and many disasters: months that have conjured up words which will never die out of hearts now living, old words with new dramatic outlines — Norway, Dunkirk, Libya, Greece, Crete, Vichy, Coventry, London, Plymouth. And as these old names, crusted with terrible contemporary significance, rose up week by week and month by month,

there seemed no end to the possibility of their extension; there was no peep vouchsafed round the corner of the future; and, for me at all events, everything that had made work possible faded and shriveled till I was faced with the inescapable fact that, so long as these clouds lowered over us, I was done for as a writer.

I have never agreed with the saying — was it Stevenson's? — that easy writing makes hard reading. It is too dogmatic, too much of a generalization. There are writers who write easily and there are writers who write with blood and tears, and, confronted by a page of each, you wouldn't know which had done which, for both the pages would be good finished work. And similarly, two men writing, one with ease and one with labor, will each produce a result as dead as mutton. A writer writes as he writes, and that is all there is to it; and many a writer will tell you that his best work has been done with a blithely flowing pen.

Certainly in my own case, for what the result is worth, the work has been easy. I could sit down to my daily piece of writing with the knowledge that it would be done. There was no fluttering invocation of the goddess of fiction, whoever she may be. I liked the look of a clean sheet of paper; I liked the actual physical business of taking up a pen. In a word, I enjoyed my job.

Not long ago I received a letter from an American who, of all things, was a priest of the Jesuit order. Americans write to authors far more often than

English people do, and their letters, as a rule, are more naïve than English letters. This correspondent said he had been reading *My Son, My Son!* and he went on, 'I am anxious to write a best-selling novel myself and would be very grateful for any advice you could offer me.'

I could not answer this, because when I was writing *My Son, My Son!* I did not know I was writing a best-selling novel: I knew only that I was writing a novel. I rely very much on what Mr. Somerset Maugham has called 'the amiable and useful little imp that dwells in your fountain pen and does for you all your best writing.' There is sense in Mr. Maugham's conclusion: 'The prudent writer gives him his head, and, if the little fellow has a mind to write something quite different from what he intended, knows that it is only common sense to yield. After all, it is to this wily sprite that is due whatever merit the ignorant ascribe to the unimportant instrument who holds the pen.'

Never have I cast myself more completely upon the winds of chance than I did in my first novel, *Shabby Tiger*. Here, for a long time, I did not know where I was going to, much less how I was going to get there. I had for a long time promised myself that I would write a novel, but no grand theme, no imposing canvas, presented itself to my imagination. And I was very lazy. I was working on the staff of the most easygoing newspaper in the world. I did not appear in the office till half an hour after noon. Well, one didn't work in the mornings. One read the newspapers and did this and that, and time slipped pleasantly by. At one o'clock one knew what the day's work was to be; and then there was lunch to be eaten and a tranquil pipe to be smoked over a game of dominoes. It was not often that one returned to the office much before three, and then there was always someone waiting there for a game of shove-ha'penny on the excellent board which had recently been brought into the office. The public houses shut

at three; there was just time to take the board to one in order to polish it before the game began. No self-respecting shove-ha'penny board is polished in any other way than by allowing beer to flow over it and then rubbing it dry. It was necessary, of course, to keep the board company, and one returned to the office in a benevolent if unworkmanlike frame of mind, to find, when the shove-ha'penny game was over, that it was high time for tea and muffins. Another game of dominoes was now a matter of course, and if, between this and seven o'clock, one's daily offering of prose fit for the eye of the world's most exacting editor was made — why, one was then prepared to call it a day. It was, anyway, seven o'clock: time for the nightly *consortium* in a near-by bar, where leader writers coming on duty and reporters going off could fittingly begin or end their respective endeavors. Then, at eight or half-past, dinner at home in that physical and mental state called mellow, averse from vigor, inimical to effort, admirable for smoking a pipe as one perambulated the suburb in summer or read a book in winter.

So the weeks went by, and the months and the years, filled with good company, admirable conversation, a creeping paralysis of the will. There are times when, if a man is to be saved, he must be taken by the scruff of the neck, hustled out of his greenhouse, and dropped into cold water. This salutary miracle was performed on my behalf.

II

I do not think I have a pennorth of superstition in my make-up. I am a pragmatic sort of person who takes things as he finds them and tries to judge them as they are. I have met many people who have seen ghosts, heard voices, been visited by intimations from outside sense; and I have never believed a word that they have told me. What happens to us, I think, is explicable

within the confines of reason, if only we could get hold of the facts. Two things completely inexplicable have happened to me, but they do not alter my rational outlook.

When I was a child of five, my family moved from one small house in Cardiff to another. There was not much to move, and my father, with a hired handcart, did the job in a number of journeys. On one of these, towards the end of that winter day, he took me and my brother, a little older than me. We trotted to the new house alongside the handcart, and my father left us there when he went back for more things. He sat us side by side on an armchair in the kitchen. On our right was the lighted fire. Facing us was a window, uncurtained, looking out upon the back yard which we could not see, for darkness was now come. There we sat, and I at least was scared to the very marrow of my bones. The strange house, the blackness beyond the window that might conceal — what? — the creaking of the stairs, and then, suddenly, the banging of a drum and a great shout, 'The blood! The blood!' — all this left me trembling with fright. The drum and the shout, I learned later, belonged to the Salvation Army, but at the time there was no knowledge to comfort me.

It was, no doubt, in consequence of this that during the years when we lived in that house I was visited again and again by a nightmare. Always it was the same. I would be sitting in the chair, with everything as it had been: the fire-light, the darkness beyond the window. It was a small window of four panes, and in my nightmare I gazed, with the hair rising in horror on my head, at the bottom left-hand pane, because I *knew* that something would materialize there out of the darkness. Presently the top of a head would appear, and I was aware of someone kneeling on the ground, his fingers clutching the window sill, raising himself with infinite slowness to gaze into the room. Bit by bit, the face ap-

peared, till it was all there, fixed and unmoving, a horrible face, white, with staring bloodshot eyes. After a while, it would begin to disappear as slowly as it had come.

On the right of anyone kneeling as this apparition was kneeling there was a door leading into the scullery, and this scullery opened into the kitchen where I sat. In my nightmare, I knew that now this ghastly visitor was passing through the scullery door, that it was only a matter of time before the door between the scullery and the kitchen would open, and he and I would be face to face. Now my eyes turned to this door through which he must come, and my heart was wrung with an apprehension more deep and fearful than any I have since known, asleep or awake. The latch would silently lift, and a hand would come into the room: a long white cruel hand that I was destined never to see attached to a body. For at this point, sweating with horror, I always woke to hear my heart pounding in the darkness and to feel the comfort of my brother's body in the bed beside me.

It is many a year since this nightmare last troubled my sleep, and, looking back on it now, it is easy to explain the whole matter by referring it back to that first night when a small nervous child shivered in darkness, in an unknown house. But here is the point of the matter which I cannot explain. I told no one of this recurrent horror till many years later. We had left the house; my brother and I were young men whose lives were filled with multifarious activities. One day we were speaking of our childhood, of that strange frightening first night in the new house, and I began to tell him of the nightmare that had been its consequence. I had only opened the story when he took me up. 'And then this happened. And then that.' And with perfect accuracy of detail he described the experience from beginning to end. 'I, too,' he said, 'had that nightmare again and again while we lived in that house.'

A nightmare of vague terror, arising from an experience shared, I could understand coming to him as to me; but I cannot understand this duality of incident in those points which were not comprised in the experience itself: the horrible face, the slowly rising latch, the strangler's white fearful hand. So I must leave it at that: a record without comment.

The second inexplicable thing that came to me came now while I was enjoying that lotus life in Manchester, watching the years slip by, watching my sons grow up, careless, happy-go-lucky, with old ambitions slowly stifling like flames beneath a bonfire too thickly piled with pleasant-smelling leaves. Round the corner from us in our suburb of Didsbury there lived a woman who was often to be found telling fortunes at local church bazaars and suchlike functions. She did it 'for fun.' She was not taken very seriously, and I do not know whether she took herself seriously. Towards the end of the summer of 1931 — just ten years ago from this time when I write — this woman met my wife in the street. 'Oh, Mrs. Spring,' she said, 'I have a message for you. Your husband's career is about to have a great change. He'll stay in journalism, but there'll be a great change — a great change.'

We had a hearty laugh over that. We were contented where we were. Life was pleasant, moderately prosperous, and, as for change, at least I was not *seeking* it. I had been asked more than once why I didn't try my luck in Fleet Street, and always I made the same answer: 'I'll go when Fleet Street asks me to go.' Within a couple of months Fleet Street had asked me, and after a lifetime spent in provincial journalism I found myself in London. I was forty-two years old.

III

Let me pause for a moment to speak of my 'addiction' to pictures. It is difficult

to believe that twenty years have passed since I bought a picture from George Russell (Æ). 'I hope,' he wrote from 84 Merrion Square, Dublin, 'that it will not prove too tiresome a possession.'

Well, it hasn't done that, though I do not think so highly of it as I did twenty years ago. It is a picture of a group of girls, some swimming in the sea, some diving from the rocks, with a dawn sky making a cool blue-gray background. It is, perhaps, a little sentimental, but I have never regretted buying it.

Russell sold his pictures literally by the yard. When I asked him how much this picture cost, he said: 'Well, I can't say, "This picture is small but a masterpiece, and this one is big but not very good," so I paint on three sizes of canvas, and charge accordingly.'

He was a most prolific painter. The Dublin drawing-rooms were full of his work. He had two styles: one the presenting of things seen, like the picture I bought from him; the other the presenting of things imagined. These were a figuring in paint of the strange thoughts that crowd his book, *The Candle of Vision*. Creatures all flame glowed on the canvas, and, in recollection, they seem to me to have been not without splendor. I wish I had one of them, to represent to me the other side of this dual man, so practical and so apocalyptic.

Russell's office, from which he conducted the business side of his life, was on the first floor of the house in Merrion Square. He had painted the walls — every inch of them — with the tumultuous creatures of his imagination, and in this milieu he would sit, his spectacles gleaming, his large foul pipe ejecting coltsfoot fumes from out of his large beard. One never, on calling upon him there, got the sense of intrusion. He was there to talk, and I imagine he would consider it a bad day if a disciple or two had not come and sat at his feet. But such a day he must have known rarely. He would sit in a big easy chair in the midst of the untidy disheveled room,

himself untidy, kindly, careless-looking, and the soft alluring Irish voice would run on and on. It is a pity some young Irishman did not constitute himself Russell's Boswell. He would not have lacked matter. One day, I remember, a young Indian who had come to Europe to study agricultural methods called while I was there to talk to Russell about his co-operative creameries. But the conversation — if conversation it could be called — did not stay with the creameries for long. Soon Russell was on the subject of Hindu scriptures, and discovered, to his delight, that his caller was not deeply versed in them. He proceeded to enlighten him. Exposition and quotation flowed out of him, ceaselessly, remorselessly. It was a remarkable moment to observe: as though some learned Indian sage, finding a young Englishman who did not know his Shakespeare, had taken up the task of education.

Russell once told me that he had given up reading and pondering on the Hindu scriptures because they had taken him into depths which he felt to be dangerous. His was a strange life — "twixt the mount and multitude."

It is a long time since I last saw Merrion Square. I do not know whether it has survived in the charming form I knew, or whether Dublin has been as reckless with its things of beauty as London was. Certainly Merrion Square was a thing of beauty, and in later years as I walked through the London squares with my ears deafened by the hammers of the housebreakers, as I watched Berkeley Square disintegrating and St. James's Square taking hard knocks, I used to think that perhaps in time to come pupils in architecture would go to Merrion Square in order that they might see with their own eyes what a Georgian square in London had looked like.

Now that German bombs have reduced to dust and ashes so much that was lovely in London, I hope we shall be more inclined to treasure what may chance to be left. We raise a ready out-

cry about the aerial vandals who have spoiled or destroyed so much of our cultural heritage; but we were destroying it ourselves hand over fist. Let us hope this will make us call a halt. The old squares, during the ten years I lived near London, were savaged — there is no other word for it — with a ruthless disregard for amenity and propriety. Now that so much has gone in the flame of war, what would we not give to have Nash's regency crescent once more in Regent Street? And, as we look at the wreckage of the Wren churches, does a blush visit our cheeks when we recall that, not so long ago, a number of them were in the market? They were 'superfluous.' No regard was had to beauty then. Treated like so much brick and stone and mortar, standing on so many sites, they were there to be bought by any merchant who cared to raze them and build a concrete warehouse.

These metropolitan monuments were not all. In the twenty years between the two wars we ran riot, trampling and ruining the irreplaceable monuments of our past. Quiet village streets were smashed overnight by the march of arterial roads. A cinema had but to ask for the site of a manor, and there was no one whose business it was to say, 'No. There are some things in England that money can't buy.'

Money, in those days, could buy anything, destroy it in an hour, and cause to spring up, where some beauty of our race had been, the cheap and spurious simulacrum, common to cheap and spurious men everywhere. Our woods and forests were cut down, our choicest agricultural land was gashed with roads and smeared with houses whose ugliness was an offense to earth and heaven. 'There's one good thing about all this bombing. It's clearing away rubbish that ought to have been cleared long ago.'

True enough; but it's an expensive method of slum clearance, and not a kindly one to the slum dwellers; and it

makes a queer comment on our 'vested interests' when something so cataclysmic as this is needed to do what should have been done without it. But most ironic of all to me is the thought that we have, for the last twenty years, been destroying the loveliest country in the world in order to cram upon it the sort of building which, in measurable time, will belong to this class which we now thank God for destroying by the scourge of war. If we had gone about it with brains in our heads, we might have devised a method of cleaning up Limehouse and White-chapel without destroying the Temple.

The last time I saw George Russell was on a January night in 1922: a fateful night in Ireland. For years Irishmen, united against the English, had waged the fight that opened on an Easter Day during the Great War. The shame of the 'Black and Tans' had been loosed on the country. It was not so much warfare as a murder campaign on both sides — vendetta, revenge. Men were surprised and shot in their beds. Masks and disguises played a greater part than uniforms. Arson, sudden death out of the night — this had gone on for years, engendering feelings more bitter than any that are created in the confrontations of warfare.

And now there were those who said it was time to make an end, to come to an accommodation with England. A treaty had been drawn up, and on this January night Dail Eireann, the Irish Parliament, was to decide whether or not to ratify it. It was the last day of many days of bitter wrangling and debate, there in a great hall of the new Irish University buildings. I watched them throughout, these men who had fought so sturdily together and who soon, unsated with warfare, were to turn their arms upon one another. Not many of them were notable to the eye. Beyond a certain bluff emphasis of character in Michael Collins, who had the masterly physique that boys love, — a big burly body, a massive head adorned with plentiful

black hair, — and a subtle blend of loving-kindness and relentlessness in Eamon De Valera's face, there was nothing to raise any one of them to the distinction that calls for a second look.

Charles Burgess, who had been De Valera's War Minister, was the most implacable and un pitying figure there. Unlike Collins and De Valera, he had no gift of speech. His words were halting, and pitched on a single unsonorous note. He was a small man with a face that became impressive from its lack of expression. You looked at him the first time, and your glance wandered on to find something more interesting. But watch him, as I did, through a morning and an afternoon, and again through a morning and an afternoon, and there began to be something uncanny in the masklike immobility of his features. They seemed to me to be like a portrait which you wouldn't mind seeing occasionally in the house of a friend, but which would make you scream if you had to live with it. The face was extraordinarily dry and empty of emotion. The skin was dry; the very hair had the dry sapless look of a wig.

Arthur Griffith was there, short, stocky, bulldoggy, his pince-nez gleaming as he defended the treaty-makers against incessant assault; and Erskine Childers, the Englishman who had given his life to Ireland, a thought-haunted gray wreck of a man, so physically weakened that not long before this I had seen him fall off a bicycle in Merrion Square.

There they were — these and so many others — in that big room which became, as the days wore on, so hot with the public breath, so foul and stale with tobacco smoke, all trying patriotically to speak in Erse and finally breaking down into the plain uncompromising English in which they were at home. There they were, with doom and death hanging over so many of them once the final rupture had come, once the treaty was accepted, and those who would not accept it turned in a madness of civil strife upon

those who did. In measurable time now this phlegmatic little Charles Burgess will fall, riddled with his old companions' bullets, as he runs from a blazing hotel; Collins will be shot mysteriously as his car makes its way through the Irish countryside; Childers, who gave so much to Ireland, will face an Irish firing squad that will relieve him of his remaining tenuous vestige of life; Arthur Griffith will die in harness.

But we do not see their doom that January night as we wait for the voting on the treaty. It was accepted by 64 votes to 57 — a margin too narrow, too narrow by far, for safety. I shall not forget the great hubbub that broke out when the figures were declared, or the sight of De Valera collapsed, his arms along the table, his head buried in his arms, or of Michael Collins standing dominant and erect, looking about him with flashing eyes — Collins who was soon to be so low, De Valera who was soon to be so high.

It was in that moment that I last saw Æ. We were jammed together in a great press of people passing out into the night. He was very deeply moved. 'We have opened a door,' he said. Yes, indeed; and it was opened upon strange things whose end is not yet seen. 'I am sure you will be in Ireland again,' Æ wrote to me soon afterwards. 'We are hardly the spiritless folk who make no history to interest our neighbors. But I hope the history that brings you will not be military history.' Now Æ has joined so many others who were 'in' at that historic moment. What history will take Englishmen back to Ireland is not yet apparent. But, to a discerning eye, the outlines begin to clear.

IV

George Russell has led me a long way from the interest in pictures with which I began. By a coincidence, that very morning when I began to write about pictures an exciting-looking flat parcel

arrived from Manchester, and I knew before I opened it that these must be the drawings by L. S. Lowry that I had asked a Manchester friend to send on. I have long been fascinated by the work of this artist, and shall use this chance to pay him tribute. Manchester has produced greater artists. They leave the city and go away in quest of color and clients. Lowry has chosen to stay in Lancashire, and if he is not Manchester's greatest artist, he is at any rate the one who can evoke the drab streets, the hard-beaten patches of earth called 'crofts' on which the children play, the gray smoke-filled sky with the mill chimneys soaring against it, the street-corner pubs, and the pale pathetic artisans as no artist, to my knowledge, has done before. More than this: his pictures evoke for me the whole tragical sense of frustration that the Industrial Revolution clamped upon the land. All that men and women have been defrauded of, all that they are not, are here implicit in the stark statement of what they have and are.

Here it is, whether you like it or not; here it is, the stricken field on which the fight for Britain's industrial supremacy was fought and won. And those who most often tell us they don't like it are those who benefit daily from its existence; as Karl Marx, building his vision of a new world, was helped to keep body and soul together by Friedrich Engels, toiling here amid the immediacy of Lancashire grit and grime.

These are the matters of Lowry's paintings and drawings. He crowds his pictures with small human figures after the fashion of Brueghel, but how different is the emotional impact of a picture by Brueghel and of a picture by this faithful delineator and interpreter of the contemporary industrial scene! A Brueghel picture always fills my heart with joy and hope at the infinite variety and color of life. All those little people — skating, shooting, working in the fields, walking down their village streets — are

distinct and individual. Each one has a quirk and a twist, a humor, something to cheer and enlighten his brief days under the sun. But Lowry refrains from bestowing upon his people any vestige of individuality. They are, almost always, flat silhouettes, moving against their drear background with the automatism of mechanic men.

I know that in Lancashire you will find as much individuality as can be come by anywhere on earth. It is a county that has thrown up more than its share of comedians and singers, artists and writers, to say nothing of many unknown men who are all compounded of wit and oddity. Was there not one Manchester business man who proceeded from home to office on roller skates, wearing a topper with the best of them? Nevertheless, Lowry is right in depicting anonymous men, men without faces, men crushed and obliterated; for thus he expresses with a sure instinct the general and inevitable drift of man under his acceptance of the machine as master. We have good reason today to know what the individual may hope for when matched against the machine.

I am but an amateur and dabbler where pictures are concerned, and I am prepared to be told by the learned that my notions are nonsense. Nothing has ever surprised me more than to be asked to open an exhibition in the Manchester City Gallery, where so often I have beguiled an hour with beauty. The reason was a rather strange one. The invitation came from a man who had read my first novel, which has a painter for its chief character. He convinced himself that this painter was based upon observation of a well-known Manchester artist, and he argued that a man interested enough in a painter to make him a character in a novel would be interested enough in painting to assemble the few platitudes necessary for 'opening' an exhibition. From the painter in my book he went on to deduce a whole gallery of Manchester identifications, thereby making me trem-

ble with apprehension of the laws of libel.

He was wrong. There is no one in that book, there is no one in any book I have written, who is 'taken from life.' What a widespread obsession there is that writers put their friends and acquaintances into their books! It goes back and back. It troubled Ben Jonson greatly. The charge was always being laid at his door, so that in the 'Induction' to *Bartholomew Fair* he takes it up. 'It is finally agreed by the foresaid hearers and spectators that they neither in themselves conceal, nor suffer by them to be concealed, any state-decipherer or politic picklock of the scene, so solemnly ridiculous as to search out who was meant by the gingerbread woman, who by the hobby-horse man, who by the costermonger.'

There is, indeed, something 'solemnly ridiculous' about these adventures in identification. I have heard people say to journalists, 'How on earth do you fill the paper every day?' With all the world's doings to draw on! With that vast well of life there forever, and the little bucket of a daily sheet for dipper! The everlasting struggle is not what to put in but what to leave out. Go into the sub-editors' room at the end of the night and consider the 'spikes,' madam; look upon the wastepaper baskets, sir.

So it is with the novelist and dramatist. A man with any eye for the human comedy cannot exist long in this world without being aware of fathomless resources of character and incident. There is an alphabet of passions and obsessions, fears and hopes, loves and hates, that can be endlessly combined, competently by most of us, and into startling new-minted form by the masters. True, there are those who lazily dip into their immediate shoals and eddies, with no re-fashioning, or too little; and these are they whom the voracious seize upon and wring through the mangle of the libel laws. But there is no need to do this. In the abundance, the superabundance.

of the deep sea of human comedy, we can steer clear of the personal imputation.

V

The Germans have got hold of Mr. P. G. Wodehouse, and what a fuss that is causing! Mr. Wodehouse, it appears, was in a concentration camp and was thence transported to the luxuries of the Adlon Hotel in Berlin, and from the Adlon he has been broadcasting, announcing an invincible feeling of non-belligerency. This has caused a grave scandal. My morning newspaper, day after day, has letters from authors and clergymen and what not, all denouncing Mr. Wodehouse and some vowing never again to read his books.

The whole hullabaloo seems to me to be nonsensical and wrong-headed. Naturally, we should all prefer that Mr. Wodehouse should do nothing to help our enemies; but which of us can confidently declare what he would do with a revolver at his head or a knife at his neck? We might take the way of sacrifice; but don't let us too vociferously damn those who don't. And I should imagine that if not physically, at least psychologically, this compulsion is behind the situation.

So much for that side of the matter. As to whether we should or should not read the books of one whose conduct we dislike, where are we to draw the line? Will the canon who exclaims 'Good-bye, Jeeves' renounce the Epistle of Saint Peter because its author on a celebrated occasion was also guilty of a denial? No; you can't intelligently stand by this doctrine of damning books because you don't like their authors. Where do we get to? Do we cut out Wordsworth and Dickens for their illegitimate children? Carlyle for his vile temper? Rousseau for what I suppose the canon would call 'flagrant immorality'? Pepys because he chucked chambermaids under the chin? Indeed no. If Jeeves was ever funny, he is as funny today as he ever was; and

what an author is to be judged by is what appears between his covers, and nothing else.

If we are to pursue Mr. Wodehouse, do we go on to pursue that solid phalanx of British novelists who have taken care, by timely removal to the United States, that they shall not find themselves in his predicament? I used to think we should, and I have said so publicly. I don't like this great Recessional. Authors are in the habit — and they should be in the habit — of claiming some nobility for their calling. Very well then. *Noblesse oblige*. That was, and is, my feeling; but I am not prepared to make a case of it. Let them settle the matter with their own consciences. We do not know all the circumstances of those cases, any more than we know what, behind the deep veil of this war's mysteries, has happened in the case of Wodehouse.

I am not trying to make out a case for a friend. I do not know Mr. Wodehouse. I have met him only once, and then spent no more than an hour in his company. Nor do I write because of excessive admiration for his books. Much nonsense about them, it seems to me, has been written by Hilaire Belloc and others; and if ever the University of Oxford made a fool of itself it did so when it conferred on Wodehouse the degree of Doctor of Letters. Wodehouse is a 'funny man' rather than a humorist, and even as a 'funny man' his range is narrow and shallow. But, I repeat, however funny he ever was, he is just as funny as that still.

The flaw in the thinking of those who now damn Wodehouse — as so many damned the King of the Belgians before he was vindicated — is that they seem to have expected the creator of Bertie Wooster to floor the Gestapo with a sally. But the author out of his study, away from his desk, off the job, is rarely the man who addresses us when we get within the covers of his books. Happy they who leave their commerce with authors at that; but few people are will-

ing to do so. 'I should love to meet the author of So-and-so!' they exclaim; and they are unaware that the author of So-and-so is a secret being not to be met, someone who does not often emerge into the light of day. It would, I think, be generally admitted by those who have met many authors that the experience has few compensations and many disillusionings.

I suppose I have met as many authors as most people, and I have found them to be divided roughly into two classes: the plain dumb who might as well be grocers, and those who seek to live up to their reputations and, in every word they utter, to twinkle, twinkle like little stars. It is only a personal idiosyncrasy, but if there is one type of conversation I cannot stand it is that of the man who hopes he is minting the epigrams that Oscar Wilde forgot.

I have met only one great novelist who impressed me as being also a great personality, and that was Arnold Bennett. Here, indeed, was a man to whom I paid the sincere tribute of wishing I could know more of him. It was merely a business occasion. Bennett had come to Manchester for the production of one of his plays at the Rusholme Theatre. I was sent by the *Manchester Guardian* to interview him. Bennett always had a high opinion of the *Guardian*. In one of his earlier short stories, 'The Death of Simon Fuge,' — one of the best short stories in the language, as I think, — he causes a character to say that the *Guardian* is not just a great newspaper: it is

the greatest newspaper in the world. Perhaps it was this old feeling of affection for my paper that caused him to receive me so well at the Queen's Hotel. There I met him, waiting in the lounge, with those somewhat prominent front teeth, that wave of hair which then, towards the close of his life, was nearly white. He was well dressed, and there was something big, solid, and, above all, dignified in his appearance and bearing.

I found him of an exquisite courtesy, treating a provincial reporter with a consideration that reporters do not always receive. We had tea together, and he talked of what he had been reading, of the plays and films he had been seeing; and he talked sensibly, with no great-man assumptions, seeking my own opinions and receiving them as though they were worth listening to. After tea, he said he would like to walk about the town a little, and invited me to accompany him. We perambulated, he with a slow heavy dignity, for three quarters of an hour. Then he said that he was tired, and I saw him back to the door of his hotel. Nothing momentous had been said on either side; but that brief contact remains curiously sharp in my memory. I have never before or since had so strongly the sense of being in the company of a man above the ruck of his fellows. How could either of us guess that afternoon that within a couple of years he would be dead and I should have succeeded him as the writer of the *Evening Standard* book page which he had made so famous?

(To be continued)

THE PROBLEM OF RECONSTRUCTION¹

BY ALFRED NORTH WHITEHEAD

I

I SHOULD like to discuss the special problem of political reconstruction after the war. The reader will understand that I am concerned only with the general outlook.

We shall be faced with a completely disrupted social system, in confusion physically, emotionally, and ideologically. This statement certainly applies to Europe, and to large portions of Asia and Africa. Also it must be remembered that sociological disruption is the most contagious disease known to mankind. Thus the first requisite is that order be imposed. There can be no civilization apart from a well-organized system of interrelated activities, within which the intimacies of family life can be developed.

Human life discloses many types of social order existing in the world, and — what is more perplexing — a great antagonism between adjacent groups in respect to differences of order, kinds of emotion, and individual human beings produced by those various types. The love of humanity as such is mitigated by violent dislike of the next-door neighbor.

For this reason, no single world-wide solution of the social problem can be successfully adopted. Each special district must be studied with a view to the immediate solution applicable to it. There can be no one general system of

social coördination which does not destroy the special capacities of smaller groups. The essence of the world-wide sociological problem is the study of the modes of grouping mankind subject to some coördination of the various groups. Of course, this conclusion is a commonplace for all successful government. In this country there are forty-eight states, and the District of Columbia, all supervised by the central government. Also in each state there are cities, and townships, and counties, each with its freedom of action within limits.

Thus there must be a careful study of the possibilities of grouping, and of coördinating groups in different areas — for example, in the Mahometan world of the Middle East, including Egypt; and in Central Europe, stretching from the Baltic to the Ægean Sea, with Russia and the Mahometan world on one side and Germany and Italy on the other. Then there is Western Europe, with its various groupings. Also there is the coördination of these groups.

But we have omitted the fact that, owing to modern techniques, the world in the future will be immeasurably more compact than in past history. India, and China, and the Oceanic Islands of the Eastern and Southern Oceans, and the two Americas which separate the ancient East from the ancient West, will be in essential, immediate connection with the small European and Mahometan worlds which first claimed attention. Traditional statesmanship must be infused

¹ This article is the last half of an address in the American Academy of Arts and Science, November 12, 1941. — EDITOR

with the dramatic novelty which the immediate future presents. The people most responsible for this duty can compare the modes of action in the past with the novel possibilities of the future. It is their business to inform the populations and to guide the statesmen. Above all, it is their business to coöperate with each other, and not to exaggerate the petty views of the universe which their own specialties present.

II

A stable order is necessary, but it is not enough. There must be satisfaction for the purposes that are inherent in human life. Undoubtedly the first essential requirement is the satisfaction of the necessities of bodily life — food, clothing, shelter. These economic factors are dominant up to the level of moderate enjoyment. They then almost suddenly become the mere background for those experiences which form the distinction between mankind and the animal world. It is the imaginative originality of mankind that produces ideals, good or bad. We live guided by a variety of impulses — towards loving relationship, towards friendship, towards other types of enjoyment such as games, art, ideals of mutual enterprise, and ideals disclosing some sense of immortality. This intimate development of human experience enters into political theory as respect for each individual life. It demands a social structure supplying freedom and opportunity for the realization of objectives beyond the simple bodily cravings.

Of course any one group of human beings, however large, has a very finite set of appetitions, depending on past history and on the sort of prevalent ideals. In every social system there are exceptions, mostly foolish, but some of them beyond price. It is of the essence of good government to provide some adequacy of satisfaction both for the large communal motives and for all

reasonable exceptions on which progress depends. It cannot be repeated too often that the only security for progress is a sincere respect for each individual human being.

As we approach these problems the first words that occur to us are 'freedom' and 'democracy.' 'Freedom' apart from relevant 'opportunity' is a meaningless notion. Robinson Crusoe could do what he liked on his island; but, until the savages turned up, there was nothing for him to do. The history of mankind with its wars is the tale of groups of people seeking opportunity by the oppression of their neighbors. Sometimes these wars sink into minor disturbances and are conventionalized, as in the late Middle Ages and in the eighteenth century.

The enthusiasm for crusades — Mahometans attacking Christians or Christians attacking Mahometans — illustrates the poverty of life in the Middle Ages. Also slavery, or half-slavery, by eliminating the claims of a large portion of the population, preserved the limited store of opportunity for the fortunate minority. Today the notion of a master race is being revived, and most of us are agreed that it means the moral degradation of mankind.

Within the last four centuries there have been three dramatic disclosures of new large-scale opportunities. I put aside the Italian Renaissance, for it concerned only a fortunate minority. It was the last spurt of the Middle Ages. Thomas Aquinas would have enjoyed it.

The first disclosure was the discovery of a new world — namely, the half-empty continent of America, as the immediate result of the new technique of oceanic voyaging. The real discovery was in fact the new art of navigation, and America was the first gift derived from it. The history of civilization opens a new chapter at this period, by reason of this increase of opportunity. The problem of existence was not solved; but hope entered into human life as never

before. The three countries most concerned — namely, Spain, the Netherlands, and England — for the period of about one hundred and fifty years, starting with the sixteenth century, exhibited a stage of excited hopefulness, while unfortunate Germany was torn to pieces by disputes inherited from the mediæval world. France was balanced between the two periods, and developed the brilliance of the old European civilization. The intensity of the French Revolution showed that novel opportunity had not penetrated throughout the nation.

The second enlargement of opportunity began about two and a half centuries after the first. It was the Industrial Revolution, which gradually developed from the middle of the eighteenth century, with its two culminations in the invention of the steam engine and the invention of the railway. Human life was transformed.

I am inclined to believe that its best effect was in opening the whole extent of North America to the European population. This was due to the steamboat and the railway. But nothing great in human history is due to a single cause; and we must also add the influence during the American Revolution of great statesmen guiding a peculiarly intelligent people.

At least the new techniques transformed life throughout the world, more especially in Europe and America. In Western Europe during the second quarter of the nineteenth century there was a period of optimism. The problem of human life seemed to have been solved, and the first International Exhibition in London, during the year 1851, celebrated this glorious triumph with the creation of the famous Crystal Palace.

Alas, something was missing. It may have been the want of intelligence among statesmen and industrial leaders. It may have been that the development of techniques was less fundamental than it seemed. Whatever the reason, the Crystal Palace, very symbolically, has been burnt down; and the nations are now

struggling to avoid the ancient evil, which is the selfish mastery of the few over the many.

At the present time we are in the first phase of the third enlargement of opportunity, perhaps the most important crisis in the history of civilization.

The intellectual development of mankind, with its self-conscious criticism, has a recent growth of some five or six thousand years. Its earlier stages seem to consist of traditional legend with the minimum of coördination. But about two thousand and six hundred years ago a widespread movement of critical judgment on the nature of things had established itself. The European races derive their special systems of thought from the brilliant races in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Near East, more especially from the Greeks. But in the course of ages the centre of activity has moved backwards and forwards through many races from Mesopotamia to the Strait of Gibraltar. It has also spread northward. There were analogous movements in China and India; and the three intellectual growths fed each other intermittently. But the European systematic thought has shown the greatest energy both in self-criticism and by its contact with practical activity. Today it is refashioning the ways of thought and action in every civilized race of the world.

The result has been a gradual broadening of opportunity. But this growth has been intermittent and wavering. Slavery became serfdom, and serfdom became free laborers on the edge of starvation. The status of the workers improved, although the slums of industrial cities disgraced industry. Indeed, at the very moment when the Industrial Revolution was in its prime Malthus managed to prove that the mass of mankind must always live on the verge of starvation. He was answered only by the nearest approach to an appeal to Divine Providence that men like John Stuart Mill dared to make. Every factor involved in human existence is too

variable to justify these sweeping statistical deductions based on past experience.

As an historic fact, the gradual introduction of novel techniques has broadened the amplitude of opportunity for the mass of mankind, slowly and waveringly. Within the past five or six hundred years there have been certain crises in this slow advance, due to these novel techniques. These critical techniques are not the most interesting facts for abstract thinkers, but their immediate effect was overwhelming. For example, the evolution of transoceanic navigation, as distinct from coastal voyaging, is not very interesting for abstract learning. But it changed the history of mankind. Again, the thoughts of Galileo and Newton were of supreme interest, but the habits of mankind between the dates 1690 and 1750 were very slightly altered. The total effect was that fortunate people had a new theme of intellectual enjoyment. Indeed, within this period the introduction of cheap spirits, such as gin, probably did more harm to English life than all the noble thoughts of the Royal Society did good. But the growth of science did arouse an alertness of intellect. The result was the Industrial Revolution in the hundred years between 1750 and 1850.

III

Today we are at the beginning of a new crisis of civilization, which gives promise of producing more fundamental change than any preceding advance. The growth of science in every department of thought seems to have reached a stage where the whole spread of knowledge discloses new possibilities for practice. This holds throughout the whole range of activities, from medicine to engineering, from mining to aerial flight, from the use of the microscope to the waves of energy from remote nebulae, from psychoanalysis to geology. The

whole of human practical activity is in process of immediate transformation by novelties of organized knowledge. It is no longer a question of a new detail such as gunpowder, or printing, or the power of steam, or novel machinery, or a new aspect of religious thought. Today the whole extent of learned thought is transforming every activity of mankind. This is the largest epoch in human history. Historical knowledge is essential, but very dangerous. The old phrases are misleading. For example, in this country it is no longer sufficient to tell young people to 'go West in a covered wagon.' In my own country, the old habits must be completely reformed. Again, we must insist, history is essential for the direction of action, but its naïve application is very dangerous.

Still more dangerous are the simple-minded generalizations of specialized scientists beyond their own limits of special knowledge. The truth is that we must work together. Historians must study the new possibilities of action; and scientists must learn the old checkered history of human emotion passing into large-scale social activities.

There is one prophecy upon which I will venture. It is that throughout the vast land areas of the Old World — Russia and China, for instance — the example of North America will be predominant. Perhaps also America has something to learn from Russia and China.

Also, forgive me when I conclude with a confession of personal political faith. I do not trust any extreme, abstract plan of universal social construction. Such plans are important for the stimulation of the imagination. But in practice every successful advance is a compromise. The general ideal is the wide diffusion of opportunity. The sort of opportunity relevant to each special case depends on special characteristics of the populations involved.

HOW TO WIN THE PEACE

BY THOMAS MANN

(Translated by K. Katzenellenbogen)

MY ESSAY is nothing and wants to be nothing but the personal creed of a man, of a writer who was born as a son of that problematical nation which today inflicts so much terrible suffering upon the world, the creed of a man who lives through these hard times with the double sensitivity of the German and the artist. I say 'of the artist' at the risk of your thinking that this quality deprives me of the right to participate in the deliberation and discussion of political and social questions. In this case I would ask your pardon, and contradict you. You cannot today — if it was ever possible — properly separate the sphere of art, culture, and spirit from the sphere of politics, and declare the artist unqualified to occupy himself with political and social questions.

One can hardly remember the times when the artist found it spiritually possible to look upon these matters as far beneath him, and to live in his ivory tower without paying attention to them. Today he is — I will not say entitled or obligated, but simply forced to do his share in the struggle of convictions, for life itself has taught him and all of us that the problem of humanity is a unit whose various spheres and forms of expression cannot be separated from one another. It was the fateful mistake of the German educated upper class to draw a sharp line of demarcation between spirit and life, between philosophy and art on the one hand and political reality on the other, and from the heights of an absolute culture to look

down disdainfully upon the social and political aspects of life. It is this that has brought the spirit of the German middle classes into its present humiliation.

In fact, the times are long past when the world could be seen divided into special spheres, of which one was the political — a special sphere to which we did not have to pay attention. Long since the question of man, the problem of humanity as an indivisible whole, arose before our eyes and has been demanding a decision, the taking of a stand, an open testimony from everyone who is spiritually alive. The question of the human conscience includes the political problem; it is a part or a phase of it. Yes, one can say that today the problem of man is essentially presented to us in a political form, and has perhaps more than in any other epoch of history assumed a political face.

The 'political' is no longer what it was — a problem for experts, a game played according to certain generally acknowledged rules, based on a universal agreement on its fundamentals — a game that brings only external changes and transformations which do not affect anyone to his very depths. Today, indeed, it is a matter of ultimate values, of the foundations of civilization, of the very idea of mankind, of those universal ties for which we have the word *religio*, 'religion.' We may call this ultimate tie 'God' or 'truth' or 'freedom' or 'right' — it is all the same. We may simply call it 'democracy,' a word whose

religious overtones, if our ears were ever indifferent to them, are more audible today than ever. The concept of politics has broadened and deepened exactly in the same manner as has that of democracy. Even if we say 'democracy' and declare ourselves for 'democracy,' we do not think so much of a certain technique of government and form of representation, — it may even be that, as such, democracy is partly in need of reform, — but we mean by the word 'democracy' the acknowledgment of those religious ties whose continued existence or churlish destruction is the problem of today — we mean the acknowledgment of truth, freedom, and right as the foundation of our social and political life.

And such matters should be of no concern to the artist? He should not be interested in truth and freedom — or in justice? For, to say it again, these are all one and the same, and one word can stand here for the other. Are these things too serious to be connected with art — which is merely play? For, indeed, that's what art is; but a strangely serious play it must be, because the artist, if he is one, devotes such infinite, such unreasonably great effort to it. Somehow there must be a relationship between art and all higher and super-rational aspirations of man, to the idea of the good and the perfect itself — the seriousness with which the artist devotes himself to this play cannot be explained otherwise. The word 'good' covers much; it is common to the æsthetic and the moral sphere. What is good æsthetically, what is skillfully done and perfect, must not necessarily be good from a moral point of view, but the infinite effort for what is good artistically has the same root as the endeavor for what religion and morality call 'good.' Art is play, but symbolic play. It is the most beautiful and serene symbol of all human striving for perfection; and wherever, in whatever sphere, in whatever manner, truth and freedom are denied, raped, and trampled upon, there art and every decent artist are also most

gravely affected, there the artist cannot breathe, nor live, nor work; he must degenerate or he must flee.

I

The world is a unit. It has various aspects, but, whichever viewpoint we choose, we always have to deal, consciously or unconsciously, with the world unity. I say 'consciously or unconsciously,' for there are times when it is possible not to be conscious of this fact. Today it is brought to the consciousness of everyone in the most drastic fashion. If art had nothing to do with politics, and politics nothing with art — should I then be writing here in America? I should be in Germany, in my house in Munich, and the Nazis would permit the German public to read my books, which are more German than Hitler, Goebbels, Ribbentrop, and Himmler all together. But they do not permit this, for my books, even the completely unpolitical ones, are a single protest against the deeds and doctrines of the Nazis, and therefore they must suppress them.

We hate totalitarianism because we know, and knew beforehand, that the total state is nothing but the preparation for total war. But to what extent we are really living in a totalitarian world today, — from a spiritual point of view, — in which everything is interconnected, the smallest and the greatest, I should like to show you with a rather amusing personal experience. A Swiss friend of mine, who understands Russian, told me in a letter that the Moscow radio mentioned my works in a broadcast on the very day the German troops marched into Russia. For two years, ever since the Hitler-Stalin treaty, mention of me had not been allowed in Russia. The broadcast that dealt with my literature had evidently been composed in advance, but could not be made as long as the Russo-German treaty lasted. The moment this treaty was broken was the right moment to unearth the manuscript.

How can one still say, then, that politics and art have nothing to do with each other?

The specific experience of our time is the unity of the world, the totality of all things human. And this unity is experienced not merely as a psychological fact but also as a historic process, as a coalescence of the world, in which the development of traffic and communication operates together with intellectual developments and creates a single stage for human destiny. Indeed, the world has become small and the universal scene of one and the same battle — a battle of faith and conviction, a religious battle in which the problem is the same everywhere. So far, the unification of the world presents itself in the form of a military dispute, as a world civil war that here and there still evokes the delusion that it is a war between nations. But in reality its fronts run everywhere, across all nations, and its resemblance to national wars of the past is purely external.

Gradually the feeling gains ground that the national idea is not any longer the dominant idea of our time and will hardly be of much benefit for the future, that the age of national states and national cultures is rapidly nearing its end, and that this war, which divides minds far more than nations, is the instrument of its dissolution. Because of the present world situation, all representatives of German literature who count are in America, as well as all important Italian physicists and historians and all important representatives of European music; and members of the same nations fight against each other out there in the world, as the Free French fought against the troops of General Dentz — which was evidently just a beginning. Does such a world situation still permit us to speak of national states? Emigration is no longer what it was: a search for temporary shelter abroad, a watchful and impatient wait for return. We are not waiting to return, we have long discarded this thought. We are waiting for

the future — and the future belongs to the new idea of world community, and restriction of national sovereignties and autonomies. To this new state our emigration, this Diaspora of the various cultures, is merely the prelude.

Take a look at Germany: against its own will, under the delusion that its 'fanatical' effort is devoted to gain supremacy for its own race, it levels the ground for world unity. Germany is disintegrating — what other sense could there be to the shoreless expansion it pursues in blind rage? It believes that it can thereby prevent the 'dismemberment' which it fears as a consequence of defeat — the destruction of the *Reich*. But Bismarck's *Reich*, once established with England's benevolent neutrality, no longer exists even today; the genius of a super-Bismarck and motorized deeds of glory without equal have pulled it apart past remedy, and nobody knows today where Germany's borders are. When Hitler oracles, out of his semi-education, that Germany must be Europe or not be at all, he debases the thought of future unity and distorts it by adulterating it with the stalest nationalism dressed up as new in the trashy race-ideology — just as National Socialism, that freak born of the old and the new, thoroughly spoils and soils everything it touches, and it touches everything. Indeed, Germany will be Europe, as all higher Germany has always been Europe, but Europe will not be Germany as Adolf the Prophet sees it. Even the term 'Europe' is already a provincialism today. The concept of the kingdom of the earth, the city of man, has been born and will not rest until it has assumed reality.

It will certainly not become reality right after this war — not for a long time. We must not imagine that immediately after the destruction of Hitlerism a paradise on earth can be established. But it is hardly more than a statement of fact today that the world civil war which rages is a step in the direction

of unity and the revelation of this unity; that it is creating a space of common responsibility; and that it is leading together, if perhaps in embittered antagonism, the ideas of man.

II

When I had been in this country for only a short time and was lecturing at Princeton University, I once talked with a venerable American scientist, a professor of the university, about the political situation. He said to me, 'The future of the world depends on two countries: America and Russia.' I still remember how strongly I was impressed at the time by this statement, which simultaneously affirmed the American evolution and the Russian revolution, and I must often think back to it under the present circumstances. The fact that Russia and the Anglo-Saxon peoples are fighting today on the same side against the enemies of freedom and human dignity is only the external expression of an inner and deeper truth: namely, of the fact that socialism and democracy have long ago ceased to be alternatives. It is upon the meeting and the adjustment of the two that the hope of the world depends — the social reform and rejuvenation of Western democracy and the humanization of Eastern collectivism by the turn toward the democratic, toward the recognition of the values and the rights of the individual. I believe that the one is well on its way in England and in the United States, the other not impossible, and that both can be furthered by the exterior political constellation.

It is inevitable that wishful thinking influences our projects for the future, our visions of the future. We have hopes and wishes, and we seek to glean from developments — or project into them — the symptoms which speak for the fulfillment of these hopes and wishes. Wishful thinking, it is said, is dangerous, for it means taking into account only the most favorable possibilities and re-

jecting the thought of the most unfavorable ones. But, on the other hand, what would man be without wishful thinking? I mean, without the belief in his ability to influence the future by his hopes and wishes, to shape it according to his will at least to some degree? After all, history is not a mere mechanism; it is made by human beings, human passions sway it, and the fatalistic renunciation of all historic wish and will would be the abdication of the human spirit. A purely negative wishing and willing, however, would come very close to such abdication, and with the mere 'Down with Hitler!' little is accomplished. It would not be wise to let our interest in what may come after Hitler be completely extinguished by the fact that anything — without any conceivable exception — is better than Hitler. It seems to me that it is our duty to ponder about these better things, and if you still have patience I should like to tell you the essential part of my thoughts in this respect.

Certainly, the first and evident premise for all thinking about the future is the annihilation of National Socialism. Its victory would save us all thinking, it would be the negative solution of all questions of the future, and it would mean night, silence, despair, slavery. I believe in its defeat; despite all vicissitudes of the struggle, I am convinced of it, and I cannot support this conviction better than with a sentence written by Thomas Paine one hundred and sixty-five years ago, in a moment when American freedom seemed almost lost. 'I have not so much of the infidel in me,' he wrote, 'as to suppose that God has relinquished the government of the world, and has given us up to the care of the devils.' In other words, I do not believe that humanity can accept the final triumph of evil, of untruth and violence. It will not resign itself to Hitler's victory, because it instinctively distinguishes between true revolution and criminally counterfeit revolution.

Hitler is not a revolutionary, but a

freebooting exploiter of the revolution; not a lion, but a hyena. He reduces the social revolution — which, it is true, is about to shape the face of the earth — to his out-of-date Alexandric Expedition for the conquest of the world. This anachronistic assault — prepared for seven years — upon a world which did not believe in war any longer, did not want it any longer, did not reckon with it any longer; this abuse of a crisis destined to lead humanity to a higher step in its social maturity and majority, for the purpose of a marauding expedition for conquest and enslavement, this whole insane and stupid criminal venture, will flounder. The whole ghastly history of National Socialism was predictable from its beginning to its present state, and predictable also is its ending. When I speak to my compatriots with the help of the British Broadcasting Corporation, I impress upon them that five sixths of all mankind is opposed to the aims of the so-called Axis powers. Add up, I tell them, the peoples of Russia and China and America and the British Empire — that is, after all, almost all mankind! How can such weight fail to make the scale sink, sooner or later, which in addition is weighed down by the secret hopes and wishes of Europe's subjugated nations?

III

And what, then, after victory? Some fear a peace of Restoration, as after the Napoleonic Wars, a peace of the Holy Alliance, a Metternich Peace. Well, an epoch of restoration will undoubtedly be necessary after the immense, anarchic brutalization of the last generation: I mean a moral restoration that would again lend validity to the concept of *right* in the internal and interstate life of the peoples. One can live, after all, under any form of government as long as only this one fundamental treasure, personal security under the law, is guaranteed; and, as soon as this is assured, recognition of international legal claims will not

be lacking. It has been proved that man cannot live without faith in a binding and protecting law, that without such faith and without respect for contracts his life turns into a bloody inferno; and a Holy Alliance of the governments and peoples for the purpose of lifting the thought of justice out of its present state of insane decay would be restoration in the best and most necessary sense of the word.

Metternich — that may be a dark name. But I think, looked at from our present times, he was not the worst, and certainly he would have been better to talk to than Hitler. For a real reactionary is always better to talk to than a fake revolutionary. A reactionary he was indeed, because, as an aristocratic internationalist, he fought and suppressed the idea of the *nation*, the national idea that had emerged from the French Revolution and was connected with the idea of freedom. Metternich feared and hated democratic nationalism and its consequences for Europe, and much of his ideas has always remained in the mentality of the Austrian Peoples' State, which was, after all, the true successor to the Holy Roman Empire. Still Grillparzer, the Austrian poet, drew the conclusion of the developments, as he anticipated them, in these words: 'From Humanism via Nationalism to Bestialism.' Prince Metternich was the example of a statesman who represented a reactionary brake and hindrance for his time, but his ideas were the right ones for the future. He was wrong at his time, and had to succumb, for the step of the national state could not be skipped. The national idea was then in its revolutionary rise. Today it is not any more.

From the national angle alone no problem of our time can be solved any more, be it economical, political, spiritual, or moral. When I said that the national idea has finished its part, I said too much. Peoples, languages, national cultures, will exist in the future too, will probably always exist. But the abso-

lutism of the national state is as antiquated today as the absolutism of kings was at a certain time in the past. To be absolute means to be above the law, which as a matter of fact is the highest degree of freedom. But if this time has taught us anything at all, it is the recognition that this highest and most absolute degree of freedom cannot be granted to either the individual or the state. We are witnessing how the unrestricted demand for freedom of one state, of National Socialist Germany, by overstepping all law and right has brought extreme danger to all other nations and threatens all with infamous slavery. I believe that this is the moment to recognize that freedom is a problem, and that upon a new solution of the problem of freedom the future of the world depends.

In reality, the rescue, the renovation, and the rejuvenation of democracy depend upon this solution, and the main content of the revolution which is taking place at present is the transmutation of the principle of freedom from the principle of licentiousness, deterioration, and anarchy to one of social ties and democratic discipline. A little political philosophy will be necessary to make clear what I mean.

It is a strange fact that the two basic ideas of democracy, *freedom* and *equality*, form a certain contrast, a logical contradiction. For, logically and absolutely considered, freedom and equality are mutually exclusive, just as the individual and society are mutually exclusive. Freedom is the need of the individual, but equality is a social need, and social equality obviously limits the freedom of the individual. But logic has not a final nor the highest validity for life, and in the ethical requirements of man freedom and equality are not a real contradiction. Christian humanity has combined the individual and the social principles in a way that is emotionally unassailable and wholly natural. The value and dignity it bestows upon the individual, the human

soul in its immediate relationship to God, are not contradicted by the equality of all before God. On the contrary, that dignity and that equality are one and the same thing.

It is in the 'human rights,' the Christian heritage of the great bourgeois revolution, that both principles, the individualistic and the social, freedom and equality, are combined and justify each other. The Christian conception of the world denies that freedom and equality constitute an irreconcilable contrast. It accepts as necessary truth that a human synthesis, a reasonable and just synthesis, must be possible between freedom and equality, the individual and society, the person and the collectivity — acknowledging that both demands include great values and great dangers. It is clear that there are *tyrannic* elements and tendencies in equality and *anarchic* elements in freedom. As a matter of fact, there would be no hope for humanity if it had only the choice between anarchy and that extreme socialization which destroys personality. The human adjustment between freedom and equality, the reconciliation of individual values and the demands of society, is called *democracy*. But this adjustment is never completely and finally attained; it remains a problem that humanity must solve again and again. And we feel today that in the relationship of freedom and equality the centre of gravity has moved towards the side of equality and economic justice, away from the individual and toward the social. *Social democracy* is now the order of the day. If democracy is to hold its own, it must be done through a socially established freedom that rescues individual values by friendly and willing concessions to equality; through an economic justice which ties all of democracy's children closely to it. A certain reform of the idea of freedom is necessary, because the crisis of democracy is, in truth, the crisis of freedom; and the salvation of democracy from the hostile attack which threatens

it will be possible only through an honest solution of the problem of freedom — in the domestic and the international life of the people.

For foreign and domestic truths and requirements parallel each other, and one is a check on the other. The absolute sovereignty of the individual, which cannot be 'interfered' with, corresponds in the lives of nations with the absolute, socially irresponsible sovereignty of the great individuals, the national states.

IV

In the future, international life, like the national life of the peoples, must be ruled by a new concept of freedom as a socially integrated and limited individualism. Only by the triumph of this idea of freedom, of the idea of international democracy, are happiness, peace, and order to be won for Europe and for the world — in the place of that anarchy which is the downfall of civilization. The insistence upon the unrestrained sovereignty of national states — that is anarchy, that is the unbridled individualism which has become impossible and ruinous. The egotism of the national states must make sacrifices, social sacrifices, which mean a limitation of national autonomy — yes, of the national idea itself. The fruit of this war must be a democracy of states in which Freedom and Equality have reached a new creative balance.

That is my wishful thinking. I believe that the new and more just order of peoples can only be erected on this ideological basis, the commonwealth which we propose in opposition to Hitler's eerie misanthropical New Order based on the maniacal arrogance of one single race. It may be a Utopia, this new and better world, this 'City of Man,' as my friends and I have called it and as we try to prepare it spiritually. But what would man be without Utopia? He must always aim at the unattainable, in order to realize the attainable and to

make at least one step forward. The evil Utopia challenges the good, the at least benevolent Utopia — and the will to fight for it. It not only arouses despair in the human being, it instills hope. And thus my answer will be inspired by hope if you ask me, who after all must know Germany, whether my fatherland will ever be able to join, out of its own free and sincere will, the world community of our wishes which is based on freedom and justice. A negative answer would be extremely discouraging, because Germany cannot be eliminated, and the social improvement of the world would be gravely hampered unless Germany is won over to it. Well, then, I will believe that this may be accomplished, and my confidence is not wholly without justification.

What we call National Socialism is the virulent perversion of ideas which have a long history in German intellectual life. Once, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, these ideas lived in grand style; they were called 'Romanticism,' and held great fascination for the entire educated world. It can well be said that these ideas have gone to the dogs since they have gone to Hitler, but that could not have been predicted at the time of their birth, at least not easily. Combined with Germany's extraordinary adaptation to the technical mass age, they constitute an explosive mixture which actually menaces all civilization. And yet once these ideas were identical with what is called 'German deepness,' 'German profoundness' — that very profoundness which the German spirit set up, as its own expression, against the pragmatism, intellectualism, eudæmonism of the Western world which it considered too shallow. In the course of a sad history of decay this 'German deepness' has been spoiled, besmirched, and divested of all humanity to such a degree that Germany has become today the enemy of mankind — it does not believe its own eyes. Goethe said once that the Germans should not be permitted for thirty

years to pronounce the word *Gemüt*. For thirty years, I believe, Germans should not be allowed to talk about 'profoundness.' Before the German spirit may again take the liberty of being 'profound' it must have regained something else which it has inadvertently lost altogether — namely, decency, simple decency. Only then will German writers and authors have the right again to champion German profoundness against Western rationalism.

We are dealing with a nation that considers itself misunderstood by the world, and that sees no other way of coming to terms with it and joining it than by overwhelming and subjugating it. This is what I consider the decisive motive for the German violence. Evidently the case is complicated; economic reasons play a part in it, such as the assumption that it is necessary to change, in a revolutionary way, the proportions of property and distribution in the world; but largely these are pretexts and rationalizations. One can regard National Socialism as the instrument of this economic revolution. Looked at more closely, however, it is the instrument of this desperate German seeking for violent unification with the world. National Socialism wants to Germanize the world; but the world has some reasons to be opposed to that, and what a Germanized world would look like we are taught by the aspect of the European continent that has already been Germanized and is in desperate rebellion against this unbearable condition. It is a senseless venture, and no victory will save it.

Our hope for Germany's moral re-

covery and its inclusion in the new world is based on this: National Socialism is something extreme and, physically as well as morally, altogether extravagant, an experiment of unsurpassable immorality and brutality that cannot be exceeded or repeated. The establishment of a state of total war in the service of race mythology and world subjugation — one can do no more, go no further. Should the experiment fail — and it will fail — there will then be some hope after all that German nationalism, the most dangerous that ever existed because it is mechanized mysticism, will have truly burned itself out, and that Germany, a country of many different inner possibilities, will throw itself in an entirely different direction. Traditions will come to light again which today are trampled in the mud, but which are no less national than those whose perniciousness has become so apparent. Germany will rediscover these better traditions, especially if the rest of the world proves that it has learned something since 1918, or at least since 1933.

One must not forget that in 1919 the victorious nations held unlimited power in their hands to bring about the changes which could have prevented the present disaster. Because of egotism and lethargy they have made bad use of their plenipotence. Thank God there are indications today that this time more courage, imagination, and wisdom will reign. We may then hope for a future which will dry, though not all sweat, at least blood and tears, and which will reconcile the freedom of nations with their equality before a law binding for all.

FLIGHT TO ARRAS. II

BY ANTOINE DE SAINT-EXUPÉRY

(Translated by Lewis Galantière)

[In this true story of the French Air Force in May 1940, Captain Saint-Exupéry describes the experiences of his own decimated *escadrille* (six planes out of twenty-three survive), and more particularly what is happening to his plane, Dutertre his observer, his gunner, and himself on a dangerous *sortie* over Arras. Here in prose of epic quality is the story of man's courage in the face of defeat. The chapters describing the take-off and the chaos within the French lines appeared in the *Atlantic* for January.—THE EDITOR]

X

FOR us in the plane, life was losing its edge, blunted by a slow wearing away of ourselves. We were aging. The sortie was aging. What price high altitude? An hour of life spent at thirty-three thousand feet is equivalent to what? To a week? Three weeks? A month of organic life, of the work of the heart, the lungs, the arteries? Not that it signifies. My semi-swoonings have added centuries to me: I float in the serenity of old age.

How far away now is the agitation in which I dressed! In what a distant past it is lost! And Arras is infinitely far in the future. The adventure of war? Where is there adventure in war? I have this day taken an even chance to disappear, and I have nothing to report unless it is that passage of tiny wasps seen for three seconds. The real adventure would have lasted but the tenth of a second; and those among us who go through it do not come back, never come back, to tell the story.

'Give her a kick to starboard, Captain.'

Dutertre has forgotten that my rudder is frozen. I was thinking of a picture that used to fascinate me when I was a child. Against the background of an aurora borealis it showed a graveyard of fantastic ships, motionless in the Ant-

arctic seas. In the ashen glow of an eternal night the ships raised their crystallized arms. The atmosphere was of death, but they still spread sails that bore the impress of the wind as a bed bears the impress of a shoulder, and the sails were stiff and cracking.

Here too everything was frozen. My controls were frozen. My machine guns were frozen. And when I had asked the gunner about his the answer had come back, 'Nothing doing, sir.'

Into the exhaust pipe of my mask I spat icicles fine as needles. From time to time I had to crush the stopper of frost that continued to form inside the flexible rubber, lest it suffocate me. When I squeezed the tube I felt it grate in my palm.

'Gunner! Oxygen all right?'

'Yes, sir.'

'What's the pressure in the bottles?'

'Er . . . seventy. Falling, sir.'

Time itself had frozen for us. We were three old men with white beards. Nothing was in motion. Nothing was urgent. Nothing was cruel.

The adventure of war. Major Alias had thought it necessary to say to me one day, 'Take it easy, now!'

Take what easy, Major Alias? The

fighters come down on you like lightning. Having spotted you from fifteen hundred feet above you, they take their time. They weave, they orient themselves, take careful aim. You know nothing of this. You are the mouse lying in the shadow of the bird of prey. The mouse fancies that it is alive. It goes on frisking in the wheat. But already it is the prisoner of the retina of the hawk, glued tighter to that retina than to any glue, for the hawk will never leave it now.

And thus you, continuing to pilot, to daydream, to scan the earth, have already been flung outside the dimension of time because of a tiny black dot on the retina of a man.

The nine planes of the German fighter group will drop like plummets in their own good time. They are in no hurry. At five hundred and fifty miles an hour they will fire their prodigious harpoon that never misses its prey. A bombing squadron possesses enough firing power to offer a chance for defense; but a reconnaissance crew, alone in the wide sky, has no chance against the seventy-two machine guns that first make themselves known to it by the luminous spray of their bullets. At the very instant when you first learn of its existence, the fighter, having spat forth its venom like a cobra, is already neutral and inaccessible, swaying to and fro overhead. Thus the cobra sways, sends forth its lightning, and resumes its rhythmical swaying.

Each machine gun fires fourteen hundred bullets a minute. And when the fighter group has vanished, still nothing has changed. The faces themselves have not changed. They begin to change now that the sky is empty and peace has returned. The fighter has become a mere impartial onlooker when, from the severed carotid in the neck of the reconnaissance pilot, the first jets of blood spurt forth, when from the hood of the starboard engine the hesitant leak of the first tongue of flame rises out of

the furnace fire. And the cobra has returned to its folds when the venom strikes the heart and the first muscle of the face twitches. The fighter group does not kill. It sows death. Death sprouts after it has passed.

Take what easy, Major Alias? When we flew over those fighters I had no decision to make. I might as well not have known they were there. If they had been overhead, I should never have known it.

Take what easy? The sky is empty.

The earth is empty.

Look down on the earth from thirty-three thousand feet, and man ceases to exist. Man's traces are not to be read at this distance. Our telescopic lenses serve here as microscopes. It wants this microscope — not to photograph man, since he escapes even the telescopic lens — to perceive the signs of his presence. Highways, canals, convoys, barges. Man fructifies the microscope slide. I am a glacial scientist, and their war has become for me a laboratory experiment.

'Are the anti-aircraft firing, Dutertre?'

'I believe they are firing, Captain.'

Dutertre cannot tell. The bursts are too distant and the smoke is blended in with the ground. They cannot hope to bring us down by such vague firing. At thirty-three thousand feet we are virtually invulnerable. They are firing in order to gauge our position, and probably also to guide the fighter groups towards us — a fighter group diluted in the sky like invisible dust.

The German on the ground knows us by the pearly white scarf which every plane flying at high altitude trails behind like a bridal veil. The disturbance created by our meteoric flight crystallizes the watery vapor in the atmosphere. We unwind behind us a cirrus of icicles. If the atmospheric conditions are favorable to the formation of clouds, our wake will thicken bit by bit and become an evening cloud over the countryside.

The fighters are guided towards us

by their radio, by the bursts on the ground, and by the ostentatious luxury of our white scarf. Nevertheless we swim in an emptiness almost interplanetary. Everything round us and within us is total immobility.

We are now flying at three hundred and twenty-five miles an hour, you on the ground would say. But that is a race-course point of view. Here time is not, but only space. The earth itself, despite its twenty-five miles a second, moves but slowly round the sun. A whole year goes to the task. Perhaps we too are slowly approached in this exercise in gravitation. The density of aerial warfare? Grains of dust in a cathedral. We, grain of dust, are perhaps attracting to ourselves some dozens, it may be hundreds, of enemy grains of dust. And all those cinders rise as from a shaken rug slowly into the sky.

Take what easy, Major Alias? Looking straight down, all that I see is the bric-a-brac of another age exhibited under a pure crystal without tremor. I am leaning over the glass cases of a museum. But already the exhibit stands outlined against the light. Very far ahead lie Dunkerque and the sea. To left and right I see virtually nothing. The sun has dropped too low, now, and I command the view of a vast glittering sheet.

'Dutertre! Can you see anything at all in this mess?'

'Straight down, yes.'

'Gunner! Any sign of the fighters?'

'No sign, sir.'

The fact is, I have absolutely no idea whether or not we are being pursued, and whether from the ground they can or cannot see us trailed by the collection of gossamer threads we sport.

'Gossamer threads' sets me day-dreaming again. An image comes into my mind which for the moment seems to me enchanting. '... As inaccessible as a woman of exceeding beauty, we follow our destiny, drawing slowly behind us our train of frozen stars.'

'A little kick to port, Captain!'

There you have reality. But I go back to my shoddy poetry: 'We bank, and a whole sky of suitors banks in our wake.'

Kick to port, indeed! Try it.

The woman of exceeding beauty has fumbled her bank.

Is it true that I was humming?

For Dutertre has spoken again. 'Hum like that, Captain, and you'll pass out.'

He has certainly killed my taste for humming.

'Camera work nearly finished, Captain. Give me a few minutes more and we can make for Arras.'

We can make for Arras. Why, of course. Since we're halfway there, we might as well.

Phew! My throttles are frozen!

And I say to myself: 'This week, one crew out of three has got back. Therefore, there is great danger in this war. But if we are among those that get back, we shall have nothing to tell. I have had adventures — pioneering mail lines; being forced down among rebellious Arabs in the Sahara; flying the Andes. But war is not a true adventure. It is a mere ersatz. Where ties are established, where problems are set, where creation is stimulated — there you have adventure. But there is no adventure in heads-or-tails, in betting that the toss will come out life or death. War is not an adventure. It is a disease. Like typhus.'

Perhaps I shall feel later, that my sole veritable adventure in this war was that of my room in Orconte.

XI

Orconte is a village on the outskirts of Saint-Dizier where my Group was stationed during the bitterly cold winter of '39. I was billeted in a clay-walled peasant house. The temperature would drop during the night low enough to freeze the water in my rustic crock, and the first thing I did in the morning was, of course, to light a fire. But to do that I had to get

out of a bed in which I lay snug and warm and happy.

Nothing seemed to me more miraculous than that simple bed in that bare and freezing chamber. It was there that I reveled in the bliss of relaxation after the exhaustion of the day's work. I felt safe in that bed. No danger could reach me there. During the day I was exposed to the rigor of the upper altitudes and the risk of the peremptory machine guns. During the day my body was available for transformation into a lair of agony and undeserved laceration. During the day my body was not mine, was no longer mine. Any of its members might at any moment be commandeered; its blood might at any moment be drawn off without my acquiescence.

For it is another consequence of war that the soldier's body becomes a stock of accessories that are no longer his property. The bailiff arrives and demands a pair of eyes — you yield up the gift of sight. The bailiff arrives and demands a pair of legs — you yield up the gift of movement. The bailiff arrives torch in hand and demands the flesh off your face — and you, having yielded up the gift of smiling and manifesting your friendship for your kind, become a monster. Thus this body, which during any daylight hour might reveal itself my enemy and do me ill, might transform itself into a generator of whimperings, was still my obedient and comradely friend as it snuggled under the eiderdown in its demi-slumber, murmuring to my consciousness no more than its gratification and its purring bliss. Yet this body had to be withdrawn from beneath that eiderdown; it had to be washed in freezing water, shaved, dressed, made respectable before presenting itself to the bursts of steel. And getting out of bed was like a return to infancy, like being torn away from the maternal arms, the maternal breast, from everything that cherishes, caresses, shelters the existence of the infant.

So, having pondered and meditated

and put off my decision as long as I could, I would grit my teeth and spring in a single leap to the fireplace, drench the logs with kerosene, and touch a match to them. Then, when the oil had flared up, and I had succeeded in crossing back to my bed, I would snuggle down again in its grateful warmth. With blankets and eiderdown drawn up to my left eye, I would watch the fireplace. At first the logs would seem not to catch, and only occasional flashes would flicker on the ceiling. But soon the fire would settle down in the hearth as if to organize a celebration. There would come a crackling, a roaring, a singing, and the fire would be as merry as a village wedding feast when the guests have begun to drink, to warm up, to nudge one another in the ribs.

Now and then it would seem to me that my good-tempered fire was standing guard over me like a particularly brisk and faithful shepherd dog going diligently about his work. A feeling of quiet jubilation would go through me as I watched it. And when the merrymaking was at its height, when the shadows were dancing on the ceiling, when the warm golden music filled the air, and the glowing logs had become a rosy architecture, when my room was quite redolent of the magic odor of smoke and resin, I would leap again from one friend to the other, from my bed to my fire; and, standing there beside the more generous friend, I could never say whether I was in truth toasting my belly or warming my heart at that fireplace. Faced by two temptations, I, like a coward, had given way to the stronger, the ruddier, the one which, with its fanfare and flutter, had advertised its wares more cleverly.

Thus three times — first to light my fire, then to get back into bed, then again to harvest my crop of flames — three times with chattering teeth I had crossed the bare and frozen tundra of my chamber and known what it was to explore the polar regions. I had made my way on foot across a desert to arrive at a blessed

haven, and my effort had been rewarded by that fire which in my presence, for my sake, had danced its jubilant air.

Very likely my story seems to you pointless, and yet this was a great adventure. My chamber had shown me as in a glass something I should never have discovered had I happened in by chance on this peasant hovel. What, as tourist, I should have seen would have been a bare and commonplace room, a vague bed, a water pitcher, an ugly chimneypiece. I should have yawned and turned away. Of its three provinces, its three civilizations, — the one of sleep, the other of fire, the third of desert, — I should have known nothing, nor been able to distinguish between them. How should I possibly have guessed the adventure of the body, first as infant clinging to the tenderness and the shelter of the maternal breast, then as soldier made for suffering, and finally as man enriched by the delight of the civilization of fire — fire, the magnetic pole of the tribe, that honors me and will do honor to my comrades who, when they come to see me if I get back, will take their part in this festivity, will draw up their chairs round mine, and while we talk of our problems, our worries, our drudgery, will nevertheless say as they rub their hands and stuff their pipes, 'There's no getting round it, a fire does make you feel fine.'

But here in this plane there is no fire to persuade me to believe in friendship. There is no freezing chamber here to persuade me of the existence of adventure. I waken out of my reverie. There is nothing here but a void. Nothing but extreme old age. Nothing but a voice — Dutertre's, stubborn in its chimerical longing — saying to me: 'Give her a little kick to the starboard, Captain.'

XII

I am doing my job like a conscientious workman. Which does not alter the fact that I feel myself to be a pilot of defeat. I feel drenched in defeat. Defeat cozes

out of every pore, and in my hands I hold a pledge of it.

For my throttle controls are frozen. These controls regulate the flow of the fuel and the power of the engines. The cold has turned them into two stumps of useless metal and has involved me in a serious predicament.

My engines are equipped with propellers of variable pitch. A propeller is not a fan, it is a whirling knife; and the pitch is the angle at which I set the blade of the knife. Sharpening a pencil, if you hold the knife blade perpendicular you will drive it straight down into the wood; hold it at an angle, and you will drive it forward towards the point of the pencil. Exactly so does the pitch of my blade determine how far forward the propeller will bite into the air at a given number of revolutions per minute of my engines. Thus the speed of my plane, when under control, is a function of two elements — motor power and pitch. Roughly speaking, I go faster or slower, not as I open or shut the throttle so much as when I increase or diminish the pitch.

But this is not the whole story. Like all engines, there is a maximum rotation which my engines cannot exceed without danger of blowing up. Since engines and propellers revolve together, this maximum may be reached either by my operation of the throttle or, in certain circumstances, by the rush of air through the whirling propellers. The pitch therefore has still another function: it allows me to increase my speed without increasing my engine rotation; and when I am flying at maximum safe rotation — say 2200 revolutions a minute — I can still increase my speed by increasing the pitch. The pitch serves in a sense as a brake on my engines without constituting a brake on my speed.

If, sitting here with frozen throttles, I am forced to dive, the combined effect of flying full-throttle and falling through space will raise my speed to something like five hundred miles an hour. This would not be serious if I could increase

my pitch to the point where maximum engine rotation would not be exceeded. But unfortunately the increase of my pitch is limited by an automatic check. On the one hand, I cannot reduce my engine power because of the frozen throttles, and on the other hand I cannot increase the pitch sufficiently to prevent a torrential rush of air into the propellers. That rush of air may increase the rotation of my engines to the point at which they blow up.

I could, if I had to, switch off my engines; but in that case I should never be able to start them again. I should then be stalled for good and all, which would mean the failure of the sortie and the crack-up of the machine. Not every terrain is favorable to the landing of a plane at one hundred and twenty miles an hour — and this, by manœuvring and gliding, is about the minimum speed at which I could hope to set the machine down. Therefore I must succeed in unblocking my throttles.

I was able to unblock the throttle of the port engine; the starboard throttle would not budge.

Now, if I were forced down, I could reduce the port engine to a degree consonant with the automatic check on the propellers. But if I cut down the port engine, over which I have regained control, I should need to be able to offset the lateral traction exercised by the starboard engine — for the accelerated rotation of the starboard engine would obviously tend to pivot the plane to port. There is a way of offsetting this tendency. I could do it by the play of my rudder. But the bar that governs my rudder has long been frozen stiff. Therefore I should be able to offset nothing at all. The moment I cut down my port engine I must go into a spin.

Here was another of the war's absurdities. Nothing worked properly. Our world was made up of gearwheels that refused to mesh. And where the gearwheels refused to mesh, there was obviously no watchmaker.

After nine months of war we had still not succeeded in persuading the industries concerned that aerial cannon and controls ought to be manufactured with regard to the climate of the upper altitudes in which they were employed. What we were up against was not the irresponsible attitude of the manufacturers. Men are for the most part decent and conscientious. I am sure that almost always their lack of initiative is a result and not a cause of their ineffectualness.

Ineffectualness weighed us down, all of us in the uniform of France, like a sort of doom. It hung over the infantry that stood with fixed bayonets in the face of German tanks. It lay upon the air crews that fought one against ten. It infected those very men whose job it should have been to see that our guns and controls did not freeze and jam.

We were living in the blind belly of an administration. An administration is a machine. The more perfect the machine, the more human initiative is eliminated from it. And in a perfect administration, where man plays the part of a cog, such things as laziness, dishonesty, or injustice cannot prevail.

But a machine is not built for creation. It is built for administration. It administers the transformation of raw materials into finished products. It goes unvaryingly through motions preordained once and for always. And an administration, like a machine, does not create. It carries on. It applies a given penalty to a given breach of the rules, a given method to a given aim. An administration is not conceived for the purpose of solving fresh problems. If, into your automobile-manufacturing machine, you inserted wood at one end, furniture would not come out at the other end. For this to happen, a man would have to intervene with authority to rip the whole thing up. But an administration is conceived as a safeguard against disturbances resulting from human initiative. Its gearwheels reject the intervention of man; they reject the watchmaker.

I was posted to Group 2-33 in November 1939. When I arrived, my fellow pilots gave me due warning.

'You'll be flying over Germany,' they said, 'without guns or controls.'

And, to console me, they added: 'But don't take it too hard, for it really doesn't matter. The German fighters always down you before you know they are there.'

Six months later, in May 1940, the guns and the controls were still freezing up.

In the spring of 1940, everybody was repeating an ancient French saw: 'France is always saved at the eleventh hour by a miracle.'

There was a reason for the miracle. It used to happen occasionally that the beautiful administrative machine would break down and everybody would agree that it could not be repaired. For want of better, men would be substituted for the machine. And men would save France.

If a bomb had reduced the Air Ministry to ashes, a corporal — any corporal at all — would have been summoned, and the government would have said to him: 'You are ordered to see that the controls are thawed out. You have full authority. It's up to you. But if they are still freezing up two weeks from now you go to prison.'

The controls would have been thawed out.

I could cite a hundred examples of this flaw. The Requisitions Committee for the Department of the North, for example, used to requisition heifers quick with young, and the slaughterhouses of France were transformed into graveyards of fetuses. The requisitioning administration was a perfect machine. And, because it was, not a single cog in the machine, not a single colonel on the board, had the slightest authority to act otherwise than as a cog. Each cog, as if the machine were a watch, was obedient to another cog. Revolt against the whole was useless. And this is why, once the machine began to go out of order, the

cogs light-heartedly took to slaughtering freshened heifers. It may have been the lesser evil. Had the machine broken down altogether, the cogs might have begun to kill colonels.

I sat at my wheel discouraged to the marrow of my bones by this universal dilapidation. But, as it seemed to me useless to blow up one of my engines, I fought again with the starboard throttle. In my disgust I forgot myself, wrestled with it too strenuously, and had to give it up. The effort had cost me another twinge at the heart. It was obvious that man was not made to do physical-culture exercises at thirty-three thousand feet in the air. That twinge of pain was a warning, a sort of localized consciousness queerly come to life in the night of my organs.

'Let the engines blow up if it pleases them,' I said to myself, 'I don't care a hang.' I was trying to catch my breath. It seemed to me that if I took my mind off my breath I should never be able to catch it again. The image of a pair of old-fashioned bellows came into my mind. 'I am stirring up my fire,' I thought. And I prayed that it would make up its mind to catch.

Was there something I had strained beyond repair? At thirty-three thousand feet a slightly strenuous physical effort can strain the heart muscles. A heart is a frail thing. It has to go on working a long time. It is silly to endanger it for such coarse work. As if one burnt up diamonds in order to bake a potato.

XIII

As if one burnt up all the villages of France without by their destruction halting the German advance for a single day. And yet this stock of villages, this heritage, these ancient churches, these old houses with all the cargo of memories they carry, with their shining floors of polished walnut, the white linen in their cupboards, the laces at their windows

that have served unfrayed so many generations — here they are burning from Alsace to the sea.

Burning is a great word when you look down from thirty-three thousand feet; for over the villages and the forests there is nothing to be seen but a grayish pall caught motionless as ice. Below it the fires are at work like a secret digestion. At thirty-three thousand feet time slows down, for there is no movement here. There are no crackling flames, no crashing beams, no spirals of black smoke. There is only that grayish milk curdled in the amber air. Will that forest recover? Will that village recover? At thirty-three thousand feet, flame over France is a gray leper.

About this, too, there is much to be said. 'We shall not hesitate to sacrifice our villages.' I have heard these words spoken. And it was necessary to speak them. When a war is on, a village ceases to be a cluster of traditions. The enemy who hold it have turned it into a nest of rats. Things no longer mean the same. Here are trees three hundred years old that shade the home of your family. But they obstruct the field of fire of a twenty-two-year-old lieutenant. Wherefore he sends up a squad of fifteen men to annihilate the work of time. In ten minutes he destroys three hundred years of patience and sunlight, three hundred years of the religion of the home and of betrothals in the shadows round the grounds. You say to him, 'My trees!' but he does not hear you. He is right. He is fighting a war.

But how many villages have we seen burnt down only that war may be made to look like war? Burnt down exactly as trees are cut down, crews flung into the holocaust, infantry sent against tanks, merely to make war look like war. Small wonder that an unutterable disquiet hangs over the land. For nothing does any good.

The German armored divisions move as they please for want of French tanks to set against them; and though the damage they do is superficial, the conse-

quences of their raids are irreparable. In every region through which they make their lightning sweep, a French army, even though it seem to be virtually intact, has ceased to be an army. It has been transformed into clotted segments. It has, so to say, coagulated. The armored divisions play the part of a chemical agent precipitating a colloidal solution. Where once an organism existed they leave a mere sum of organs whose unity has been destroyed. Between the clots — however combative the clots may have remained — the enemy moves at will. An army, if it is to be effective, must be something other than a numerical sum of soldiers.

We stand to the enemy in the relation of one man to three. One plane to ten or twenty. After Dunkerque, one tank to one hundred. We have no time to meditate upon the past; we are engaged in the present. And the present is what it is. No sacrifice, at any moment, on any front, can serve to slow up the German advance.

Whence it comes that throughout the civil and military hierarchies, from the plumber to the minister of state, from the second-class private to the general, there reigns a sort of bad conscience which no one can or dares put into words. And this because sacrifice has become a mere caricature of itself. It is beautiful to sacrifice oneself. These die in order that the rest be saved. The flames are grimly fought when the conflagration has to be put out. Men fight to the death in the cut-off camp so that their rescuers may have time to come to their aid. Yes, but we are surrounded by the conflagration. We have no camp on which to fall back. There is no hope of rescue. And as for those for whom we fight, for whom we say we are fighting, what are we doing except ensuring their murder? For the aeroplane, dropping its bombs on towns behind the lines, has made this such a war as was never dreamt of.

I was later to hear foreigners reproach France with the few bridges that were

not blown up, the handful of villages we did not burn, the men who failed to die. But here on the scene it is the contrary, it is exactly the contrary, that strikes me so powerfully. It is our desperate struggle against self-evident fact. We know that nothing can do any good, yet we blow up bridges nevertheless, in order to play the game. We burn down real villages, in order to play the game. It is in order to play the game that our men die.

Of course some are overlooked! Bridges are overlooked, villages are overlooked, men are allowed to continue alive. But the tragedy of this rout is that all its acts are without meaning. The soldier who blows up a bridge can only do it reluctantly. He slows down no enemy — he merely creates a ruined bridge. He destroys his country in order to turn it into a splendid caricature of war. But it was a real bridge, not a caricature, that was blown up.

If a man is to strive with all his heart, the significance of his striving must be unmistakable. The significance of the ashes of the village must be as telling as the significance of the village itself. But the ashes of our villages are meaningless. Our dead must be as meaningful as death itself. But our dead die in a charade.

The question used to be asked, 'Are our men dying well or badly?' Meaningless question! The Staff know that a given town can hold out for three hours. Yet our men are ordered to hold it forever. Having no means of offense, they as good as beg the enemy to destroy the town in order that the rules of war be respected. They are like a friendly opponent at chess who says, 'But you have forgotten to take your pawn.' Our men spend their time challenging the enemy.

'We are the defenders of the village,' they say in effect. 'You are the attackers. Ready? Play!'

And under the burst of an enemy squadron the village is wiped out.

'Well played, Nazi!'

Certainly inert men exist, but inertia

is frustrated despair. Certainly fugitives exist, and I remember that twice or three times Major Alias had threatened to shoot occasional gloomy wretches picked up on the highways and evasive in the answers they gave to his questions. One's impulse is so strong to make somebody responsible for disaster, and to believe that by putting him out of the way all can be saved. The fugitives are responsible for the rout, since there would be no rout if there were no fugitives. Therefore, flourish a gun and all is well.

As well bury the sick in order to eliminate sickness. Major Alias always ended by slipping his gun back into its holster. He could see very well that there was something awfully pompous about that gun, like a comic-opera sabre. Alias knew perfectly well that these mournful fellows were an effect, not a cause of the disaster. He knew absolutely that these were the same men, exactly the same men, as those who somewhere else in France, at that very moment, were accepting the fact that they must die. In two short weeks two hundred thousand of them accepted the fact that they must die. But some men are stubborn and insist upon a reason why they should die.

It is hard to find a reason.

Here is a runner engaged in the race of life against other runners of his own class. The starter fires, the runner springs forward — and he discovers that he has a ball and chain attached to his leg. He quits.

'This race doesn't count,' he says.

'It does, though, it does!' you protest.

What are you going to tell a man to make him put his heart into a race that is not a race? Alias knew what those fugitives were thinking. 'This race doesn't count' was what they were thinking.

Alias put his gun back into the holster and tried to find a better argument.

There is but one better argument, but one logical argument, and I challenge anybody to find another. It is this: 'Your death will have no effect at all.

Defeat is inescapable. But it is proper that a defeat manifest itself by dead. There must be mourning. Your part is to play the dead.'

'Very good, sir.'

Alias did not despise the fugitives. He knew well enough that his argument always worked. He himself accepted the expectancy of death. All his crews accepted the expectancy of death. His argument, slightly disguised, never failed to work with us: 'It's damned awkward. But the General Staff want it done. They very much want it done. . . . And that's that.'

'Very good, sir.'

Alias knew that we had accepted.

My very simple notion is that those who died served as bondsmen for the rest.

XIV

I have aged so much that all that I was is left behind me. I stare out through the great glittering plate of my window. Below me are men, but their stories full of sound and fury are reduced to the scale of infusoria wriggling under a microscope. Who can work up interest in a family of infusoria?

Were it not for this twinge of pain that seems to me a living thing, I could sink into drowsy rumination, like an aged tyrant. It is only ten minutes since I spoke of our crews as supernumeraries. Pure rhetoric and sickeningly false. When I saw the German fighters below, did my fancy speak of tender sighs? It spoke of poisonous wasps. That was reality. They were tiny, and they were obscene. It is hard to believe that I invented that disgusting literary image of a dress with a train. I couldn't have! For one thing, I have never seen the wake of my ship. Here in this cockpit, in which I fit like a pipe in its case, I can see nothing behind me. I see behind me through the eyes of my gunner. And then only if the intercom is working. My gunner never called down to me, 'Adoring suitors aft in the wake of our train!'

All this is mere juggling with words. Of course I should like to believe, I should like to fight, I should like to win. But try as a man will to pretend to believe, pretend to fight, pretend to win by setting fire to his own villages, it is hard to feel elation over pretense.

It is hard to exist. Man is a knot into which relationships are tied, and my language serves me hardly at all.

I am a tourist in the land of the infusoria.

What is this in me that has broken down? What is the secret of substitutions? Whence comes it that in other circumstances I should be overwhelmed by what seems to me now remote and abstract? Whence comes it that if I were Pasteur the play of true infusoria would seem to me pathetic to the point where a slide under a microscope would represent something infinitely more vast than a virgin forest, and the watching of that slide would seem to me the most thrilling kind of adventure?

My field of vision embraces a territory as large as a province, yet round me space has shrunk to the point of suffocation. I have lost the sense of distance, am blind to distance. But I feel now a kind of thirst for it. And it seems to me that I have stumbled here upon a common denominator of all the aspirations of mankind.

When chance awakens love, everything takes its place in a man in obedience to that love, and love brings him the sense of distance. When, in the Sahara, the Arabs would surge up in the night round our campfires and warn us of a coming danger, the desert would come to life for us and take on meaning. Those messengers had lent it distance. Music does something like this. The humble odor of an old cupboard does it when it awakens and brings memories to life. Pathos is the sense of distance.

But I know that nothing which truly concerns man is calculable, weighable, measurable. True distance is not the concern of the eye; it is granted only to

the spirit. Its value is the value of language, for it is language which lends life to things.

And now it seems to me that I begin to see what a civilization is. A civilization is a heritage of beliefs, customs, and knowledge slowly accumulated in the course of centuries, elements difficult at times to justify by logic, but justifying themselves as paths when they lead somewhere, since they open up for man his inner distance.

There is a cheap literature that speaks to us of the need of escape. It is true that when we travel we are in search of distance. But distance is not to be found. It melts away. And escape has never led anywhere. The moment a man finds that he must play the races, sing in choruses, or make war in order to feel himself alive, that man has begun to spin the strands that bind him to other men and to the world. But what wretched strands! A civilization that is really strong fills man to the brim, though he never stir.

There is a density of being in a Dominican at prayer. He is never so much alive as when prostrated and motionless before his God. In Pasteur, holding his breath over the microscope, there is a density of being. Pasteur is never more alive than in that moment of scrutiny. At that moment he is moving forward. He is hurrying. He is advancing in seven-league boots, exploring distance despite his immobility. Cézanne, mute and motionless before his sketch, is an inestimable presence. He is never more alive than when silent, when feeling and pondering. At that moment his canvas becomes for him something wider than the seas.

Distance granted man by the childhood home, by the chamber at Orconte, by the slide under Pasteur's microscope; distance opened up by a poem. What are these but the fragile and magical gifts that only a civilization is able to distribute? For distance is the property of the spirit, not of the eye; and there is no distance without language.

But how am I to quicken the sense of my language when all is confusion? When the trees round the house are at one and the same time a ship transporting the generations of a family and a mere screen in the way of an artilleryman? When the press of the German bombers bearing down upon the villages has squeezed out a whole people and sent it flowing down the highways like a black syrup? When France displays the sordid disorder of a scattered anthill? When we must fight, not against a flesh-and-blood opponent, but against rudders that freeze, throttles that jam, bolts that stick?

'You may drop down now, Captain.'

I may drop down. I shall drop down. I shall drop down upon Arras. I shall carry out the second half of our mission — the low-altitude sortie. Behind me I have a thousand years of civilization to help me. But they have not helped me yet. I dare say this is not the moment for rewards.

At five hundred miles an hour I lose altitude. Banking, I have left behind me a polar sun exaggeratedly red. Ahead and three or four miles below me, I see the broad surface of a rectilinear mass of cloud that looks like an ice floe. A whole province of France lies buried in its shadow. Arras lies shadowed by it. Beneath my ice floe, I imagine, the world has a blackish tinge. The war must be stewing there as in the belly of a giant soup kettle. Jammed roads, flaming houses, tools lying where they were flung down, villages in ruins — muddle, endless muddle.

To drop down here is like tumbling into a ruin. We shall have to splash about in their mud. We shall have to live with those below in their barbarous dilapidation. Below us lies a world in decomposition. We are like travelers who, after long years amid coral and palm, are on our way home penniless. We face the prospect of a return to our native sordidness — the greasy food of avaricious relatives, the cantankerousness of family

squabbles, the bad conscience born of money cares, the disappointed hopes, the degrading flight before the rent collector, the arrogance of the landlord, squalor, and the stinking death in hospital. Up here, at any rate, death is clean. A death of flame and ice, of sun and sky and flame and ice. But below! That digestion stewing in slime . . .

XV

Dutertre's voice came down the intercom.

'Due south, Captain.'

Quite right. Safer to lose altitude over our own zone than the enemy's.

Looking down on those swarming highways, I understood more clearly than ever what peace meant. In time of peace the world is self-contained. The villagers come home at dusk from their fields. The grain is stored up in the barns. The folded linen is piled up in the cupboards. In time of peace each thing is in its place, easily found. Each friend is where he belongs, easily reached. All men know where they will sleep when night comes. Ah, but peace dies when the framework is ripped apart — when there is no longer a place that is yours in the world — when you know no longer where your friend is to be found. Peace is present when man can see the face that is composed of things that have meaning and are in their place. Peace is present when things form part of a whole greater than their sum, as the divers minerals in the ground collect to become the tree.

But this is war.

I can see from my plane the long swarming highways, that interminable syrup flowing endless to the horizon. The inhabitants of the war zone are being evacuated. This, at any rate, is the official version. But it is no longer true. They are evacuating themselves. There is a crazy contagion in this exodus. Where are these vagabonds going? They

are going south — as if in the south there was room for them, food for them, tender hands waiting to welcome them. But southward there are only villages filled to bursting, men and women sleeping in sheds, stocks of food running out. Southward the most generous hearts are beginning little by little to harden at the sight of this mad invasion which little by little, like a sluggish river of mud, is beginning to suffocate them. Can a single province lodge and nourish all France?

Where are they going? They have no notion. They are tramping towards phantom havens — for scarcely does this caravan come up to an oasis when it ceases to be an oasis. One by one these oases burst their bonds and pour into the caravan. And when, by chance, the caravan comes upon a real village, a village that seems still to be alive, it swallows up its substance in a single night, gnaws it clean as the worm polishes the bone.

Faster than the exodus, the enemy moves. Here and there armored cars roll past the stream. It thickens, swirls, flows for a moment backwards. Whole German divisions flounder in this stew; and Germans who at another point were killing their kind are here quenching the thirst of the refugees.

In the course of the retreat our Group had been quartered in a dozen villages. A dozen times our Group had been entangled in the dragging herd that shuffled slowly through those villages.

'Where are you bound?'

'Nobody knows.'

They knew nothing. Nobody knew anything. They were evacuating. There was no way to house them. Every road was blocked. And still they were evacuating. Somewhere in the north of France a boot had scattered an anthill, and the ants were on the march. Laboriously. Without panic. Without hope. Without despair. On the march as if in duty bound. The rural constable or the mayor's clerk had wakened them at three in the morning. One morning at three

the order had run through the village: 'Everybody out!'

They had been expecting this. For two weeks they had seen the passage through their village of refugees who no longer believed in the eternity of their homes. Man had been a settler on the planet. He had ceased to be a nomad. He had built himself villages that had lasted through the ages. The family house had received him at his birth and transported him to his death. And then, like a good bark crossing the water from bank to bank, it had carried his sons over the same stream. All that was ended now. The villagers were on the move. And no one so much as knew why.

Three days earlier I had seen one of these villages go to pieces. It was six in the morning, and Dutertre and I, coming out of our billet, found ourselves in the midst of chaos. All the stables, all the sheds, all the barns and garages, had vomited into the narrow streets a most extraordinary collection of contrivances. There were new motorcars, and there were ancient farm carts that for half a century had stood untouched under layers of dust. There were hay wains and lorries, carryalls and tumbrils. Had we seen a mail coach in this maze it would not have astonished us. Every box on wheels had been dug up and was now laden with the treasures of the home. From door to vehicle, wrapped in bed sheets sagging with hernias, the treasures were being piled in.

Together, those treasures had made up that greater treasure — a home. By itself, each was valueless, yet they were the objects of a private religion, a family's worship. Each filling its place, they had been made indispensable by habit and beautiful by memories, had been lent price by the sort of fatherland which, together, they constituted. But those who owned them thought each precious in itself and for itself. These treasures had been wrenched from their fireside, their table, their wall; and now that they were heaped up in disorder

they showed themselves to be the worn and torn stock of a junkshop that they were. There is no picking up the bits of a face destroyed: it is to the face itself that love goes out. What was heaped up in those carts before us was now forever dead.

'What's going on here? Are you mad?'

The café owner's wife to whom we spoke shrugged her shoulders.

'We're evacuating.'

'But why, in God's name?'

'Nobody knows. Mayor's orders.'

She was too busy to talk, and vanished up her staircase. Dutertre and I stood in the doorway and looked on. Every motorcar, every lorry, every cart and charabanc, was piled high with children, mattresses, kitchen utensils.

Of all these objects the most pitiful were the old motorcars. A horse standing firmly in the shafts of a farm cart gives off a sensation of solidity. A horse does not call for spare parts. A farm cart can be put into shape with three nails. But all these vestiges of the mechanical age! This assemblage of pistons, valves, magnetos, and gearwheels! How long would it run before it broke down?

'Please, Captain. Could you give me a hand?'

'Of course. What is it?'

'I want to get my car out of the garage.'

I looked at the woman in amazement.

'Are you sure you know how to drive?'

'Oh, it will be all right. The road is so jammed, it won't be hard.'

There was herself, and her sister-in-law, and their children — seven children in all.

That road easy to drive? A road over which you made two or ten miles a day, stopping dead every two hundred yards? Braking, stopping, shifting gears, changing from low into second and back again every fifty yards in the confusion of an inextricable jam? Easy driving? The woman would break down before she had gone half a mile! And gas! And oil! And water, which she was sure to forget!

'Better watch your water. Your radiator is leaking like a sieve.'

'Well, it's not a new car.'

'You'll be on the road a week, you know. How are you going to make it?'

'I don't know.'

She won't have gone three miles before running into half a dozen cars, stripping her gears, and blowing out her tires. Then she and her sister-in-law and the seven children will start to cry. And she and her sister-in-law and the seven children, faced by problems out of their ken, will give up. They will abandon the car, sit down by the side of the road, and wait for the coming of a shepherd.

But it is astonishing how few shepherds there are. Dutertre and I are staring at sheep who have taken things into their own hands. And these sheep are off in an immense clatter of mechanical equipment. Three thousand pistons. Six thousand valves. The grate, the grind, the clank, the bump of this machinery. Water boiling up in a radiator already. And slowly, laboriously, this caravan of doom stirs into movement. This caravan without spare parts, without tires, without gasoline, without a mechanic. They are mad!

'Why don't you stay at home?'

'God knows we'd like to stay.'

'Then why do you leave?'

'They said we had to.'

'Who said so?'

'The mayor.'

Always the mayor.

'Of course we'd all rather stay at home.'

It is a fact that these people are not panicky; they are people doing a blind chore. Dutertre and I tried to shake some of them out of it.

'Look here, why don't you unload and put that stuff back into your house? At least you'll have your pump water to drink.'

'Of course that would be the best thing.'

'But you are free to do it. Why don't you?'

Dutertre and I are winning. A cluster of villagers has collected round us. They listen to us. They nod their heads approvingly.

'He's right, he is, the captain.'

Others come to our support. A road mender, converted, is hotter about it than I am.

'Always said so. Get out on that road and there's nothing but asphalt to eat.'

They argue. They agree. They will stay. Some go off to preach to others. And they come back discouraged.

'Won't do. Have to go.'

'Why?'

'Baker's already left. Who will bake our bread?'

The village has already broken down. At one point or another it has burst; and through that hole its contents are running out. Hopeless.

Dutertre said what he thought about it:—

'The tragedy is that men have been taught that war is an abnormal condition. In the past they would have stayed home. War and life were the same thing.'

I went back to the café owner.

'You can let us have a cup of coffee, I suppose. We are flying this morning.'

'Ah, my poor lads!'

She wiped her eyes. It was not we she was weeping for—nor herself. Already she was crying with exhaustion. And yet she had not even started on that extraordinary exodus of a caravan which was to go further to pieces with every mile of its journey.

Here and there overhead the enemy fighters flew low and spat forth a burst of machine-gun fire upon this lamentable flock. But it was astonishing how on the whole the enemy left that flock to itself. Here and there I could see a car in flames, but very few. And there were few dead. Death was a sort of luxury, something like a bit of advice. It was the nip in the hock by which the shepherd dog hurried the flock along. Though one wondered why this enemy action was so little in-

sistent, so altogether sporadic and local. The enemy was at no pains whatever to blow up the roads. True, the roads had no need of the enemy to be useless. The machines took care of that. They went spontaneously out of order. The machine is conceived for a deliberate and peaceful society, a society master of its time. When man is not present to repair the machine, regulate it, polish it, it ages at a dizzying pace. Tonight all these machines will look a thousand years old. I seemed to be looking on at the death throes of the machine.

Here is a peasant whipping up his horse. Perched on his seat with the majesty of a king, he lords it over the whole caravan.

'You look very satisfied up there.'

'Ah, it's the end of the world.'

Suddenly I felt queasy. All these workers, these simple people, each with his place in the world, were to be transformed into parasites, vermin. They were going to spread over the countryside and devour it. The thought made me sick.

'Why don't you stay home? Who is going to feed you?'

'Nobody knows.'

How is one to feed millions of migrants shuffling over miles of road at the rate of two to ten miles a day? If food existed, it could not be brought up to them.

All this muddle of men and scrap iron lost on the asphalt of the highways made me think suddenly of my march through the Libyan desert. Prévot and I had crashed in a landscape glassy with black rocks and covered with a carpet of sun-grilled iron. This was not far different.

I stared at the refugees in despair. How long would a swarm of locusts last in a field of asphalt?

'Do you expect to drink rain water?'

'Nobody knows.'

They knew nothing. For ten days they had seen an unbroken stream of refugees from the north flow through their village. For ten days they had watched this unending exodus. And

their turn had come. They would take their place in the procession. But without confidence: —

'If it was up to me, I'd rather die at home.'

'We'd all rather die at home.'

That was true. Their village might have collapsed over their heads, and still none would have chosen to leave.

Had France possessed reserves of food, that food could never have been brought up the highways down which this stream was flowing. If you have to, you can force your way downstream through broken-down cars, jammed cars, inextricable knots of traffic at successive crossroads. But how can you move against such a stream?

'There being no reserves of food,' said Dutertre grimly, 'all is well.'

A rumor is spreading that the Government has forbidden all evacuations. Even if it were true, how were the orders to be transmitted? There are no roads, and the telephone cables are jammed, or cut; or the messages are received with a distrust born of experience. And it is no longer a matter of giving orders. What is wanted is the invention of a new code. For a thousand years man has been taught that women and children are to be shielded from war. War is a matter for men only. The village mayors are full of this law of society; their clerks know it; the schoolteachers know it. Assume that suddenly they receive orders to stop the evacuations — which is to say, force women and children to remain in the zone of bombardment. It will take them a month to adjust their conscience to this sign of a new age. You cannot overthrow a system of morality at one blow. And, while you examine your conscience, the enemy continues his advance. Wherefore the mayors, their clerks, the schoolteachers, send forth this stream of people on the highways. What is to be done? Where does truth reside? Forward troop the sheep without shepherd.

'Is there a doctor in this village?'

'You don't live here, I take it.'

'No. We live up north.'

'What do you want of a doctor?'

'My wife is going to have a baby.'

Lying among her kitchen utensils, in this desert of old iron.

'Couldn't you have thought of a doctor earlier?'

'We've been four days on the road.'

The road is an irresistible stream. Where can you stop? Every village you move through is deserted the moment you arrive, pours into the caravan like the flow of a burst pipe into a giant sewer.

'No. No doctor here. The Group doctor is ten miles up the line.'

'Well, thank you.'

The man mopped his forehead. Everything was going to pieces. His wife would bring her child into the world in a bed of kitchen utensils. There was nothing cruel about this. It was above all, most of all, monstrously beyond the bounds of things human. Nobody complained. Complaint was meaningless. His wife would die, and he would not complain. There was no help for it. It was a cosmic cataclysm.

'If we could only stop somewhere!'

Find a real village, a real inn, a real hospital. But, for God knows what reason, the hospitals too are being evacuated. It is part of the game. There isn't time to recast the rules of the game. Find a real death. But there is no real death any longer. There are bodies that break down the way the cars do.

Everywhere in this mob I sense a worn-out haste, a haste that has renounced haste. At the rate of two to ten miles a day these people are fleeing before tanks moving at fifty miles a day and aeroplanes flying at four hundred miles an hour. Thus treacle flows when the bottle has been overturned. This man's wife would lie in; but he had all the time in the world before him. It was urgent. Was it really urgent? It was suspended in unstable equilibrium between urgency and eternity.

The world of these people had slowed down, like the thoughts of a dying man. This was an enormous flock that stood, exhausted and shuffling, at the gates of a slaughterhouse, condemned to death on its asphalt. Were there ten or only five million of them on the asphalt? Here was a people accepting the notion of its reabsorption into eternity. It had forgotten that individuals existed; its thoughts were of a cosmic tragedy.

'How,' I said to myself, 'are these people to survive?' Man does not eat branches. But they themselves were not in the least horrified by their fate. Wrenched from their homes, their work, their responsibilities, they had lost all significance. Their very identity seemed to have been rubbed off. They were very little themselves. They were very little alive. Later, they would re-invent their sufferings. Meanwhile they were suffering most of all from the aching strain of heavy loads, from the loosened knots in bedsheets that dripped with their dreary entrails, from the strain of pushing their handcarts those many miles.

Not a word about the defeat. Naturally. No man feels the need of discussing a thing that constitutes his very substance. They *were* the defeat. I had suddenly the vision of a France losing its entrails. Quick! Sew up our France! There is not a moment to lose. France is doomed.

It began again. Like fish on dry land, these people were suffocating:—

'Anybody got any milk here?'

A question to make you die laughing.

'My kid hasn't drunk anything since yesterday.'

The kid was a six-months-old baby. He made a lot of noise. But his noise wouldn't last. Fish out of water are soon quiet. There is no milk here. There is only scrap iron here. There is only an enormous quantity of useless scrap iron, falling apart mile after mile, dropping bolts, nuts, screws, sheets, while it bears this prodigiously needless exodus, this people, away towards oblivion.

A rumor spreads that some miles to the south the road is being machine-gunned by the enemy. There is talk of bombs. There is even the muffled sound of distant explosions. The rumor is no mere rumor.

But these people are not frightened. They seem even to perk up a little at the news. That concrete risk seems to them healthier than this drowning in old iron.

Ah, the blueprint that historians will draft of all this! The angles they will plot to lend shape to this mess! They will take the word of a cabinet minister, the decision of a general, the discussion of a committee, and out of this parade of ghosts they will build historic conversations in which they will discern farsighted views and weighty responsibilities. They will invent agreements, resistances, attitudinal pleas, cowardices. But I know what a ministry can be. I've seen one. It taught me that, once a government evacuates, it is no longer a government. It is like a human body. If you begin to take it apart, sending the stomach here, the liver there, the guts somewhere else, that collection no longer constitutes an organism. I spent twenty minutes at the Air Ministry. And I can tell you that a minister is a being who controls the movements of his messenger. Miraculous control: he has only to press a button. An electric cord still joins the flunky to the minister. The minister presses the button and the flunky appears.

'My car,' says the minister.

And there his authority stops. He gives his flunky a little exercise. But the flunky is not sure if, on earth, there exists a car that is the minister's. No electric cord runs between the flunky and any chauffeur. The chauffeur is lost somewhere, out in the world. What could the men who governed us know of the war? Situated as we were, impossible as liaison now was, it would take our people a week to arrange for the bombardment of an enemy division spotted by my Group. What sound could reach

the ears of our governors from this land that was losing its entrails? News moved at the rate of ten miles a day. The telephone service was out. There was no way of transmitting a picture of this being, this France, in a state of decomposition. The Government swam in a void, a polar void. From time to time it was reached by desperately urgent appeals; but they were abstract, reduced to three scrawled lines. How could those who governed know whether ten million Frenchmen had or had not already died of hunger? And this cry for help from ten million men could have been contained in a single sentence. It wants but a single sentence to say:—

'Meet you tomorrow at four.'

Or:—

'They say ten million men are dead.'

Or:—

'Blois is in flames.'

Or:—

'They've found your chauffeur.'

All this on the same level of importance. Just like that. Ten million men. The motorcar. The Army of the East. Western civilization. The chauffeur has been found. England. Bread. What time is it?

I give you seven letters. They are the seven letters of the Bible. Reproduce the Bible with them for me.

Historians will forget reality. They will invent thinking men, joined by mysterious fibres to an intelligible universe, possessed of sound farsighted views and pondering grave decisions according to the purest laws of Cartesian logic. There will be powers of good and powers of evil, heroes and traitors. But treason implies responsibility for something, control over something, influence upon something, knowledge of something. Treason in our time is a proof of genius. France has been transformed into a cancer.

XVI

Already, as I move in the direction of Arras, peace is everywhere beginning to

take shape. Not that well-defined peace which, like a new period in history, follows upon a war decorously terminated by a treaty. This is a nameless peace that stands for the end of everything. For an end of things that go on endlessly ending. It is an impulse that little by little finds itself bogged down. There is no feeling that either a good or a bad conclusion is on the way. Quite the contrary. Little by little the notion that this putrefaction is provisional gives way to the feeling that it may be eternal. Nothing here is conclusive, for there is no grip by which this great creature can be seized as you might seize a drowning man by knotting your fist in his hair. Everything has gone to pieces, and not even the most pathetic striving can bring up more than an insufficient lock of hair. The peace that is on its way is not the fruit of a decision reached by man. It spreads apace like a gray leprosy.

Below me those roads on which the caravan is breaking down, on which the enemy kills or quenches thirst at will, put me in mind of the miry regions where land and water are indistinguishable. This peace that has become fused with this war has begun to rot this war.

My friend Léon Werth heard on the road an extraordinary remark which he recorded in his excellent book. On the left were the Germans, and on the right the French. Between the two flowed the sluggish stream of refugees. Hundreds of women and children extricating themselves as well as they were able from flaming motorcars. A French artillery officer, entangled despite himself in the snarl, stopped to set up his seventy-five beside the road. Opposite, the enemy aimed, missed his target, and mowed down the migrants in his line of fire. Whereupon Frenchwomen rushed upon the French lieutenant who, running with sweat, was stubbornly performing his incomprehensible duty, trying (with twelve men!) to hold a position that was untenable, and shouted at him: 'Go away! Go away! You cowards!'

The lieutenant and his men went away. Wherever they went, they were brought up against problems of peace, not of war. Of course children should not be massacred on the highways. Yet every soldier who pulled a trigger found a child in his line of fire. Every army lorry that moved or tried to move through that mob was potentially the cause of death among those people. For, moving upstream against the flow, the lorry could not but bottle up the whole highway.

'You are mad! Let us through! My child is dying!'

'We're fighting a war.'

'What war? Where are you fighting it? It will take you three days to go a mile against this current.'

Here was a handful of French soldiers in a lorry, trying to reach a point to which they had been ordered and which had certainly been abandoned to the enemy hours before. All that they could think about was their plain duty:—

'Gangway, there!'

'Why don't you let us ride with you? You are beasts!'

The child bawls.

'And the kid . . .'

But the kid has stopped crying. It takes milk to make a child cry.

'We're fighting a war.'

There was a kind of despairing stupidity in the way they repeated it.

'But you will never find your war! You will croak on the road with the rest of us!'

'We're fighting a war.'

They were by no means sure of what they were saying. They were by no means sure that they were fighting a war. They had never seen the enemy. They were rolling in a lorry towards a goal more fugitive than a mirage. They were moving towards nothing more than a peace that was a pool of putrefaction. And, as they were caught up inextricably in the chaos, they jumped down from the lorry. Instantly they were surrounded.

'Have you any water?'

So they shared their water.

'Have you any bread?'

And they shared their bread.

'But you can't leave her here to die!'

So into their lorry they put the woman who lay dying in a car wrecked by the side of the road.

'And what about this child?'

The child went in beside the dying woman.

'And this woman in labor.'

They put her in beside the living child.

And for another woman they found room merely because she was crying so bitterly.

It took an hour to free the lorry and turn it round till it too faced the south. Rising like an erratic block, it too would now be carried downstream by the civilian flood. The soldiers had been converted to this peace. Because they hadn't been able to find the war. Because the gun aimed at you kills a child. Because on your way up to the lines you stumble upon women in labor. Because it is as useless to try to transmit information or receive a command as to communicate with the inhabitants of Mars. There is no longer an army. There are only men.

They have been converted to this peace. They have been changed by the force of things into mechanics, doctors, shepherds, stretcher-bearers. Because these little people are ignorant of how to cure the ills of their scrap iron, the soldiers repair their cars. And not one of them could tell you, in the midst of his sweating labor, whether he was a hero or a man who deserved to be court-martialed. It would not astonish him if he were decorated on the spot. Nor if he were stood up against a wall with a dozen bullets in his skull. Nor if he were demobilized. Nothing would astonish him. It is a long time since he and his kind have crossed the frontiers of astonishment.

Here is an immense stew in which not an order, not a movement, not a scrap of

news, not a wave of anything at all can run on beyond a single mile. Exactly as the villages topple one by one into the common sewer, so these army lorries, absorbed into this peace, are one by one converted to this peace. These handfuls of men who would have accepted without question the notion of their imminent death — assuming they had so much as thought of it — now accept the duties they meet; and they fall to their job of repairing an antique carryall into which three nuns, embarked upon God knows what pilgrimage, off for God knows what haven invented in a fairy tale, have hustled a dozen children menaced by death.

XVII

Like Alias, when he slipped his gun back into its holster, I shall not sit in judgment upon these men who threw in their hand. Where was the breath to come from that would bring them life? Where the face that would unite them? All that they knew of the rest of the world was contained in the crazy rumors that sprouted by the roadside every mile or two in the form of ludicrous hypotheses, and somehow, slowly spreading through a mile or two of the chaos, were transformed into certainties. The United States had declared war. The Pope had committed suicide. Russian planes had set fire to Berlin. The Armistice had been signed three days ago. Hitler had landed in England.

There is no shepherd for the women and children, but none for the men, either. The general is able to communicate with his orderly, the cabinet minister with his messenger. It may be that, by their eloquence, general and minister are able to transfigure their servants. Alias is able to communicate with his pilots and to win from them the sacrifice of their lives. The sergeant commanding the lorry is able to communicate with his squad. Beyond this, there is no way in the world of welding oneself to the rest.

Even if we assume that at the moment of my flight towards Arras a genius existed who knew precisely what was happening in France, and that genius, that chief, had a plan that would save France, all that chief possessed to carry out his plan was an electric cord which rang a bell in his reception room; and the army he commanded was made up of that messenger — provided that messenger was still at his post in the reception room.

Those stray parties of soldiers who, separated from their scattered units, wandered over the jammed roads, were soldiers with no soldiering to do. But they were not filled with that despair which the vanquished patriot is supposed to feel. If in their confusion of mind they longed for peace, the peace they longed for meant to them the end of this unspeakable chaos and the return to some kind of identity, however humble. A shoemaker among them might dream that he was hammering pegs into a shoe. To hammer pegs into a shoe again would mean for him building a world. And if these men allowed themselves to be rolled back by the tide it was because the general chaos had disintegrated them, and not because they felt a horror of dying. They felt no horror of anything; they were empty of feeling.

We may take it as incontrovertible fact that men cannot be changed overnight from conquered into conquerors. Anybody who speaks of an army falling back in order to go on fighting is employing verbal subterfuge. The troops that fall back, and those that give battle, are not the same men. The army that fell back was no longer an army. I do not mean that men in retreat become unworthy of victory. Simply, the fact of falling back destroys all the ties, material and spiritual, by which they were once united. What was once an army becomes a scattering of disintegrated parts allowed to filter back to the rear. Fresh reserves are substituted for them, because the reserves constitute an or-

ganism, a whole. It is they, not a reorganized army, who undertake to block the path of the enemy. As for the fugitives, an attempt is made to collect them and reshape them into an army. But where, as in France, there are no reserves to throw in, your initial retreat is irreparable.

There is but one principle of unity, and that is victory. Defeat not only splits men off from other men, it creates a split within the individual himself. If those apathetic fugitives do not mourn the fate of a collapsing France it is simply because they are the defeated. It is in the hearts of those men that France has been defeated. To weep for France is already the promise of victory.

But we do not mourn the fate of fragments: we mourn the fate of a whole. Virtually none of those men, neither those still fighting nor those already benumbed, will see that whole, will see the face of a vanquished France, until later, when the tumult has died and silence has been restored. Today, in the midst of defeat, each man is concentrated upon a stubborn or shattered vulgar detail — a broken-down lorry, a road bottled up, a throttle stuck fast, a sortie that is a patent absurdity. The absurdity of the sortie is a sign of the collapse. The very act performed to arrest the collapse is a sign of absurdity. For every element stands divided against itself: there is no unity.

During a retreat there is no weeping over the collapse but only over the bit of iron that has snapped off in one's hand, the sole tangible thing, the thing out of order. Some weep for a smashed radiator, others for the lack of milk. Alias, if he were to weep, would weep over the imbecility of the depots that refuse to deliver spare parts except against a requisition drawn in due form — parts that tomorrow will fall into the hands of the enemy. Collapsing France has become a deluge of fragments none of which has any identity — neither this aeroplane nor that lorry, neither that

highway nor this foul throttle that refuses to budge.

Of course a collapse is a sad spectacle. Base men reveal themselves base. Pillagers reveal themselves pillagers. Institutions crumble. Troops heartsick and weary decompose. All these effects are implicit in defeat as death is implicit in the death rattle. But if the woman you loved were run over by a lorry, would you feel impelled to criticize her ugliness?

The injustice of defeat lies in the fact that its very victims are themselves made to look like heartless accomplices in the result. It is impossible to see behind defeat those sacrifices, that austere performance of duty, the self-discipline and the vigilance that are there — those things the god of battle was unable to make use of. Defeat shows us generals without authority, men without organization, crowds that are passive. Of course there was negligence, inertia, failure to measure up, here and there, to the task. But what is really significant is that the rumor of a Russian change of heart or an American intervention was enough to triple the value of these men, enough to bind them together again in a common hope. Each time that such a rumor blew through France like a sea wind, our men were filled with a fresh exaltation. If France is to be judged, judge her not by the effects of her defeat but by her readiness to sacrifice herself.

France agreed to go to war in the face of the arguments of logicians who spoke thus: 'We cannot in a single year create the forty million Frenchmen needed to match those eighty millions of Germans. We cannot overnight transform a nation of farmers into a people of factory workers such as the Germans are. We cannot change our wheat fields into coal fields. We cannot look for American intervention. The Germans demand Danzig. They thus impose upon us, not the duty of saving Danzig, which is impossible, but of committing suicide in order to preserve

our honor. But what dishonor is there in possessing a land that brings forth more wheat than machines? What dishonor is there in being only forty millions to the other man's eighty millions? Why should the dishonor be ours, and not the whole world's?' They were perfectly right. War, for France, signified disaster. Was France to refuse to go to war in order to spare herself defeat? I think not; and France must instinctively have thought the same, since none of these warnings dissuaded France from war. Among us, spirit conquered intelligence.

Life always bursts the boundaries of formulas. Defeat may prove to have been the only path to resurrection, despite its ugliness. I take it for granted that to create a tree I condemn a seed to rot. If the first act of resistance comes too late it is unprofitable. But it is, nevertheless, the awakening of resistance. A tree may grow from it as from a seed.

France played her part. Her part consisted in offering herself up to be crushed and in seeing herself buried for a time in silence — since the world chose to arbitrate, and neither fought nor united against a common enemy. When a fort is to be taken by storm some men necessarily are in the front rank. Almost always, those men die. But the front rank must die if the fort is to be captured.

Since we of France agreed to fight this war without illusions, this was the rôle that fell to us. We put farmers into the field against factory workers — one man into the field against three. I refuse to sit in judgment upon the ugliness of the collapse. Is a pilot brought down in flames to be judged by the consequences? Obviously, he will be disfigured.

XVIII

Which does not prevent this from being an odd war — aside from the spiritual fact that made it necessary. An odd war! I was never ashamed of this label. Hardly had we declared war when, being in no state to take the of-

fensive, we began to look forward to our annihilation. Here it is.

We set up our haycocks against their tanks; and the haycocks turned out useless for defense. This day, as I fly to Arras, the annihilation has been consummated. There is no longer an army, there is no liaison, no matériel, and there are no reserves.

Nevertheless I carry on as solemnly as if this were war. I dive towards the German army at five hundred miles an hour. Why? I know! To frighten the Germans. To make them evacuate France. For since the intelligence I may bring back will be useless, this sortie can have no other purpose.

An odd war!

As a matter of fact, I am boasting. I have lost a great deal of altitude. Controls and throttles have thawed out. I have stepped down my speed to no more than three hundred and thirty miles an hour. A pity. I shall frighten the Germans much less.

After all, it is we ourselves who call this an odd war. Why not? I should imagine that no one would deny us the right to joke about it as we pleased, since it is we who are sacrificing ourselves, not those others who think our joke immoral. Surely I have the right to joke about my death if joking about it gives me pleasure. And Dutertre has that right. I have the right to play with paradoxes. Why is it that those villages are still in flames? Why is it that that population has poured pell-mell out on the pavements? Why is it that we rush with inflexible determination towards an unmistakable slaughterhouse?

I have every right to my joke; for in this moment I am fully conscious of what I am doing. I accept death. It is not danger that I accept. It is not combat that I accept. It is death. I have learned a great truth. War is not the acceptance of danger. It is not the acceptance of combat. For the combatant, it is at certain moments the pure and simple acceptance of death.

And while men in the outside world were wondering, 'Why is it that more Frenchmen are not being killed?' I was wondering, as I watched our crews go off to their death, 'What are we giving ourselves to? Who is still paying this bill?'

For we were dying. For two hundred thousand Frenchmen did die. Those dead do not exemplify an extraordinary resistance. I am not singing the praises of an extraordinary resistance. Such a resistance was impossible. But there were men here giving up their lives. There were clusters of infantrymen massacred in undefendable farmhouses. There were aviation crews melting like wax flung into a fire. And all this exemplified something.

Look once again at Group 2-33. Will you explain to me why, as I fly to Arras, we of Group 2-33 still agree to die? For the esteem of the world? But esteem implies the existence of a judge. And I have the impression that none of us will grant whoever it may be the right to sit in judgment. To us who imagine that we are defending a cause which is fundamentally the common cause, the cause of Poland, of Holland, of Belgium, of Norway; to us who hold this view, the rôle of arbiter seems much too comfortable. It is we who sit in judgment upon the arbiter. I invite you to try to explain to us who take off with a 'Very good, sir,' having one chance in three to get back when the sortie is an easy one; I invite you to try to explain to a pilot of a certain squadron, half of whose neck and jaw were shot away so that he is forced to renounce the love of woman for life, is frustrated in a fundamental right of man, frustrated as totally as if he were behind prison walls, surrounded as inescapably by his virtue and preserved as totally by his disfigurement, isolated as completely by his ugliness — I invite you to explain to him that certain bystanders are sitting in judgment upon him. Toreadors live for the bull-fight crowd: we are not toreadors. If you said to another of my friends, to Hochedé,

'You've got to go up because there are bystanders who have their eye on you,' Hochedé would answer, 'There must be some mistake; it is I, Hochedé, who have my eye on those bystanders.'

For, after all, why do we go on fighting? For democracy? If we die for democracy then we must be one of the democracies. Let the rest fight with us, if that is the case. But the most powerful of them, the only democracy that could save us, chooses to bide its time. Very good. That is its right. But, by so doing, that democracy signifies that we are fighting for ourselves alone. And we go on fighting despite the assurance that we have lost the war. Why, then, do we go on dying? Out of despair? But there is no despair. You know nothing at all about defeat if you think there is room in it for despair.

There is a verity that is higher than

the pronouncements of the intelligence. There is a thing which pierces and governs us and which cannot be grasped by the intelligence. A tree has no language. We are a tree. There are truths which are evident, though not to be put into words. I do not die in order to obstruct the path of the invasion, for there is no shelter upon which I can fall back with those I love. I do not die to preserve my honor, since I deny that my honor is at stake, and I challenge the jurisdiction of my judge. Nor do I die out of desperation.

And yet Dutertre, looking at his map, having plotted the position of Arras somewhere round the one hundred and seventy-fifth degree of the compass, is about to say to me, — I can feel it, — 'One hundred and seventy-five degrees, Captain.'

And I shall accept.

(To be concluded)

THIS GREEN YOU BROUGHT

BY LAWRENCE LEE

STRONG sun shines on the lawns grown thick.
This is the first full summer day;
Children, mysterious at play,
As birds are bright and quick.
But, Father, this small child is sick.

Of summer she is the total all:
On grass the yellowest buttercup,
The light when she looks up,
The sudden near birdcall.
And now she lies so still and small.

To save there are but hands you taught;
Make them all-gentle and all-skilled.
We fear the summer suddenly stilled —
It was our dearest thought
To see her run this green you brought.

FUNERAL ON FRANKLIN STREET

A Farce

BY PHILIP GOODMAN

OF the funerals of the Duke of Wellington, Victor Hugo, and General Grant I have no first-hand knowledge, but of the funeral of Simon Englander, who lived next door to the DaCostas, I can speak as an eyewitness. The Iron Duke's cortege may have been longer, the grief of France's best bad poet may have been deeper, and the pomp and muffled drums for our most amiable President more impressive, but Simon could boast, could the dead boast, that in one respect at least his funeral surpassed those of the others: Simon had *two* hearses.

One of them bore his bones, the other his huge trombone for which he had formed a lifelong attachment. It was his wish that the instrument have its own coffin and be buried alongside of him, as a tribute to its fealty from the time, as a young man, he first oompah'd on it in the old Garrick Theatre orchestra to his last days when, as a man of wealth and local fame, he would play it for his own enjoyment, though not the neighbors'. This wish was devotedly carried out.

Men make their fortunes variously, by purveying to human necessities, to human vanity, to human credulity, or to ever so many human mischiefs, venal and venial. Englander, however, chose to make his by giving quasi-scientific exhibitions to the public of the human form, specifically of the female human form. He was the proprietor of the ram-

shackle Star Theatre, the Home of Refined Burlesque, where a man might take a sister, but hardly his own.

For years the Star had been a mint for Englander. At prices from fifteen to seventy-five cents his patrons saw the same extravaganzas, with the same cast and chorus, as Sam T. Jack or Hurtig & Seaman in New York scaled at twice the price. Even when such extraordinary productions as 'Twentieth Century Widows,' 'Giddy Girls,' 'A Load of Peaches,' and 'Frisky Maidens' came to the Star, the prices were not raised. Only once do I recall a slight revision upwards, but that was excusable, for the attraction was that Sophoclean masterpiece, 'Krausmeyer's Alley,' with the original Billy Watson. It was the feminine chorus of this show that Billy nicknamed the 'Beef Trust.' It was a day when men demanded flesh on the hoof.

Because of its policy of a change of bill weekly, the Star had a steady clientele, so steady that it kept open the year round, except for two weeks in August when the house would be repainted, the scenery repatched, and the plumbing repaired. Englander never let the Star run down.

There were those who didn't want to let the Star run at all, citizens who were concerned with such abstractions as Taste and Public Morals. They would form Committees of Protest almost every year and descend upon Englander, demanding that he 'clean up or close up.'

That Simon had the Police Department, from top to bottom and from bottom to top, in the vest pocket in which he kept his large bills was something that these civic purifiers didn't know and couldn't know. Yet Simon was not high-handed with them; he received them courteously, listened to their charges and threats, and always promised to do some fumigating. Of course this was never done. Simon had to consider his patrons. After his death, when his son Syd took over the management, these committees met with quite a different reception. Syd told them that God Almighty would not have made a shapely leg had He not intended it to be seen.

'Let them get around that,' Syd used to say with a satisfied chuckle.

The day that Simon and his trombone were taken to their last rest the crowd in front of the Englander home was so dense that from half a block away it looked more like a raid than a funeral. It was not till the carriages came into the street and the mourners began entering them that one could identify the funereal character of the occasion. But this was dispelled to some extent by the cumbrous handling of those who had come for a free ride. In the first carriages the members of the family were permitted to take their assigned places unmolested, but when it came to the 'outsiders' there was a rush and crowd-burst for the remainder of the carriages, with pushing and shoving and bumping and jostling that was more than two policemen could subdue. When the last of some thirty carriages had been filled, many of them overfilled, those who had failed to get inside hitched on behind or rode on the frail step outside the door.

The cortege passed along Franklin Street to Market, where it turned west and proceeded till the Star was reached. There, according to plan, the carriage came to a halt while the theatre's orchestra of seven pieces, stationed on the steps, played 'Kiss Me Again, Nellie,' a beloved tune of Simon's. Gus Falken-

berg, the leader, with a sense of the solemnity of the moment, beat the time slow and dirgeful, all the inner beauty of the piece coming out.

Surrounding the musicians, in costume and make-up, — for there was a matinee that day, — were the cast and chorus of the 'High Kickers' troupe which happened to be playing the Star that week. It was now one-thirty in the afternoon, and though it had been announced that the curtain would be delayed half an hour out of respect to the memory of Simon, the company would not have had time to dress *after* the cortege had passed the theatre. That accounted for the colorful scene on the steps, with the comedians' red bulbous noses blending with the fleshy pink tights of the girls.

With the playing of an encore of 'Kiss Me Again, Nellie,' this time in a spirited tempo, the entire company sang a verse and chorus, the girls, through habit, wiggling to the beat. The occupants of the carriages, who had got out to witness the impressive ceremony, returned to their seats, and the tide of mourning resumed its course out Market Street to the cemetery gates.

Few of the mourners accompanied the two caskets to their graves; instead, they convened in the saloon near the entrance of Heavenly Rest. When Syd Englander and the family returned from the grave he announced that all the drinks were on him, whereupon the mob switched from beer to schnapps, except Mr. DaCosta, who shamelessly ordered a bottle of Rhine wine for himself and my aunt.

'I didn't say wine,' Syd shrilly reminded Mr. DaCosta.

'If you're going to be petty about it we won't drink it,' said my aunt, pushing the bottle to one side.

'If you meant *beer*, why didn't you say *beer*?' Mr. DaCosta replied, hurt.

My mother made her way to me through the crowd to inquire for my father. I said I hadn't seen him.

'You'd better look for him,' she said. 'You know how funerals affect him.'

It was not easy to find anyone; you had to thread your way past bodies, feet, elbows, and raised beer steins, in the bar, in the back room, and in the garden at the rear, ducking a waiter who might be coming towards you head-on, with a bouquet of steins clumped in each hand. From the garden came the echo of that favorite cheer of the Alcoholic Fellowship that goes: 'He's all right. . . . Who's all right? . . . Eng-land-errrrrrrrrrrr!'

There, undoubtedly, I should find my father.

When I reached the garden there were perhaps forty or fifty men, stein in hand, marching round and round in lock step, singing 'For He's a Jolly Good Fellow.' My father then climbed upon the improvised bar and started warbling 'Kiss Me Again, Nellie,' whereupon the crowd hilariously joined in, repeating the refrain several times, with its touching opening line: 'Kiss me again, Nellie, for the bugle soon will call.' Mrs. Englander, who had stepped into the garden, was overcome by the song's sad association and had to be led away. There were a number of moist eyes.

What now ensued is painful to report. When the crowd, led by my father, had exhausted its repertoire of songs, it huddled about him to hear a new proposal. Their plans apparently set, they left the garden and went into the bar, which now had thinned out considerably.

'There he is! There he is!' came shouts from a few of them, as they espied Mr. DaCosta sitting with his wife, nibbling at free pretzels. I was relieved when I saw that my father had disappeared and was not among them.

The ringleader now was Mr. Seil. In Western-sheriff fashion, sporting his two hundred and fifty pounds, he walked over to Mr. DaCosta and requested that he step outside 'for just a moment.' Disarmed by Mr. Seil's playful demeanor, Mr. DaCosta didn't demur, nor did his wife. He rose from his chair, told my aunt to wait till he returned, put a

few pretzels in his pocket, and went out the door, followed by the 'posse.'

'What can I do for you?' he inquired when he reached the sidewalk.

The reply he waited for came not in words. It came more intelligibly, more impressively, with Mr. Seil grabbing him posteriorly and whisking him in bum's-rush fashion to the waiting hearse that only a little while before had borne the remains of Simon Englander. At the driver's seat, reins in hand, stood my father, ready to give his horses the whip when he got the signal.

He hadn't long to wait. With the assistance of a few others, Mr. Seil dumped his struggling victim into the wagon and slammed the double door tight. There was no escape for Mr. DaCosta, for the door was knobless on the inside. He sat upright and pounded on the window in protest.

Mr. Zwilling, the undertaker, came rushing out of the saloon with a stein in his hand and called to his drivers to break up the disgraceful scene. The drivers, however, by prearrangement, were in the garden splashing contentedly in suds.

'Get going! Get going!' shouted Mr. Seil to my father, and my father immediately got going. As the wheels of the cavalcade now slowly turned, Mr. DaCosta frantically thumped the windows of the hearse with his fists.

To avoid the policemen stationed at almost every corner along Market Street, my father, leading the procession with his equipage, chose the smaller streets on the way back to town. But in doing so he picked up a throng of marchers, boys of all ages, who were bewitched at the sight of a corpse prancing in its cage like an animal in captivity. They ran alongside the hearse and the half-dozen carriages, booing Mr. DaCosta, sticking out their tongues and threatening to throw things at him. Fortunately the window protected his person, but windows cannot protect our sensibilities.

When we reached Schimmel's brewery

my father alighted and called out: 'Schimmel's Junction! Change cars!'

There was an astonishing unanimity of desire and decision, everyone knowing that at Schimmel's, as at every brewery back in those amber days, you could gratuitously drink as much as you could carry.

A covenant was entered into with the kids, providing for their each receiving a dime, in hand paid, in consideration of their keeping an eye on the horses while we were inside. As for Mr. DaCosta, we didn't bother to include him among the things to be watched. We knew that with a door that was knobbed on the outside and knobless on the obverse he was safe.

My father got up close to the window of the hearse and bellowed: 'It's all free . . . beer and sauerkraut . . . much as you want.'

Mr. DaCosta was suffering visibly.

As soon as our backs were turned, we afterwards learned, the prisoner-corpse, to gain the attention and sympathy of the kids, pressed a dollar bill against the window. Making signs to indicate that he wished the kids to turn the outside knob so that he might escape, and pointing to the dollar as their reward for so doing, he quickly consummated a deal, deals being consummated quickly when the buyer is in the mood to buy and the seller is in the mood to sell. Promptly the knob was turned and Mr. DaCosta clambered out of the hearse, again to take his place among free and honest men. He stretched his legs, straightened his tie, folded the dollar bill and replaced it in his pocket, and thanked his liberators, not with a thanks that was perfunctory, or condescending, or wanting in appreciation, but with a thanks that spoke of the satisfaction it gives us all to know that we have done a good deed. He then shook the hand of each boy and, with an affable 'good-bye,' walked away. He went into the brewery.

All was forgiven and forgotten when he joined us, and we gave him two cho-

ruses of 'For He's a Jolly Good Fellow.'

'Gee, it was hot in there!' he said.

'That's to prepare you for where you're goin',' said some wit in the crowd.

The sally rocked the room with laughter. Even Mr. DaCosta, who could never be called a free-laughers, succumbed to the humorous quips and soon became stricken with hiccups.

None of us paid any attention to Mr. DaCosta's affliction; though his head would jerk regularly, he was able to steady himself so that no beer was spilled from his seidel. But when he reached his twentieth seidel it was seen that the jerking had gone from his head to his knees. We stretched him out across three chairs, and my father admonished the gathering to give him air.

'Don't crowd around him!' he shouted. 'Haven't you ever seen a man run over by a beer truck before?'

'Is there any ammonia in the house?' someone asked.

'No,' came a reply; 'will beer do?'

'We'd better get him home,' said Mr. Seil with a twinge of guilt.

My father agreed, sharing the same guilt. He told the others to remain.

'Seil and I will take him home,' he said. 'Don't break up the party on *his* account. Give us a hand and we'll carry him out.'

Mr. DaCosta's limp form was lifted from the chairs and borne out the door and down the outside steps.

'I think he'd be more comfortable in the hearse,' said my father, directing his helpers to the stately black wagon. It couldn't be doubted that he would be, and he was carefully lifted into it.

My father and Mr. Seil climbed up to the driver's seat, my father resuming the reins.

'He'll be all right soon as he gets home,' my father reassured the others and he touched the horses with his whip.

On the return to Franklin Street no small boys chased after the hearse, for this time Mr. DaCosta was a quiescent corpse.

EDUCATING DAUGHTERS

BY MILDRED H. McAFEE

I

COLLEGES like Wellesley have been pronounced incurably ill so often in recent years that it seems only fair to explain to our friends that the reports of our demise are seriously exaggerated. We have symptoms which educational doctors have considered fatal. We count credits for degrees. We use grades — A, B, C, D, E, occasionally F and G. We have required courses. We have a four-year course. We have survey courses, but they are for advanced students. Freshmen take no aerial tours of the field of knowledge; they dig deep into old or new material and wait for the fruits of their labor to develop in the process of growth. We encourage students to study Latin. We believe in examinations. We require a reading knowledge of a foreign language. In spite of all this, we have more qualified applicants for admission than we can accommodate.

Ours would be a different college if Wellesley were a suburb of any city but Boston. It matters greatly that its founder was Henry Fowle Durant, brilliant lawyer, cultured gentleman, independent scholar, New Englander by nature and nurture, Harvard man, zealous evangelist, trustee of Mount Holyoke Seminary, friend of Dwight L. Moody, husband of Mrs. Durant. These facts about the founder left their mark on the college. So did the fact that it opened as late as 1875. Wellesley never had to prove that women had brains.

The college would not be the same today if its President Alice Freeman had

not married George Herbert Palmer, if Miss Caroline Hazard had not given years of limited health and unlimited service as president and president emeritus, if Katharine Lee Bates had not been Professor of English Literature when she wrote 'America the Beautiful,' if Vida Scudder had not been a Christian Socialist and an exciting teacher, if Annie Jump Cannon and Mayling Soong Chiang had not been as loyal alumnae as they have been distinguished women, if Ellen Fitz Pendleton had not spent fifty-four years as student, teacher, secretary, dean, and president.

Historic accident may explain why things come to be, but a live institution will decide which elements in its heritage it shall retain. Wellesley is traditional (to the extent that it is traditional) by choice, not inertia. It makes no claim to universality of method. Ours is not the best type of education for every girl. We engage in no arguments with St. John's College or the University of Chicago or anybody else to prove that other methods are invalid. For Wellesley, we believe in our tradition.

That tradition begins with the assumption that college education has a twofold purpose. It is designed to enrich life for students, and thereby to make life richer for the community of which they will be a part. This twofold implication of a college education is reflected in Wellesley's two mottoes, *Incipit Vita Nova* and *Non Ministrari sed Ministrare*. Readers educated in the

nonclassical tradition can get the translations from any Wellesley woman.

A scholar has intellectual curiosity and the ability to satisfy it. He does not have to be a professional scholar in order to qualify for the title. Nobody pretends that most of Wellesley's graduates will devote their lives to scholarship, but the method chosen to enrich their lives is that of introducing them to the joys of a scholarly approach to life. Study for the sake of understanding the world we live in is the vocation of the Wellesley College community. Its faculty members are specialists in the understanding of some field of knowledge, and its students are their apprentices in the art of intellectual comprehension. The good teacher rouses the student's interest, largely by the contagion of his own delight in what he is doing. He may or may not be a 'well-rounded' personality. Acquaintance with the angularity of an enthusiastic specialist is one of the interesting features of a collegiate education.

A faculty in a college of Wellesley's size and type has all varieties, and sometimes they agree and sometimes they disagree. There is the teacher who believes in presenting the most difficult and least interesting material first to test the mettle of a class. There is the one who cares very little about the content of the course so long as students learn to challenge their preconceived notions and to think. An equally earnest colleague is convinced that the way to learn to think is to learn quantities of facts and let them fall into order as understanding develops. Miss A wants to create an informal atmosphere in the seminar and provides tea and cigarettes during an intermission. Miss B will have none of 'such nonsense.' Mr. A cannot understand why some girls are so slow to get the point and races along with his superior students, leaving the others breathless in the chase. Mr. B moves slowly from point to point, giving neat, systematic outlines to literal-minded students and leaving others craving discussion.

Mention any type of instruction that is the last word in educational experimentation and I can almost guarantee to produce a sample on the Wellesley campus.

Finding the type that most nearly fits the student's needs is a job calling for maturity on her part and for the advice of an intelligent dean. The student who must work in a particular way and cannot profit from methods foreign to her inclination is apt to suffer. She is often the person we advise to withdraw and help to place in a different type of college with no ill-feeling on our part and vast relief on hers. We shall be glad when the world wakes to the fact that it is no disgrace for a student to be told that a college of a special kind is not the best place for him.

II

No student starts from the beginning in college. She has been selected for admission because she has shown some aptitude for intellectual adventure. From the first a girl with well-developed interests is encouraged to develop them further. However, the curriculum requires her to experiment in several directions before she decides to devote herself especially to any one of them. She takes English Composition, Hygiene, Speech (unless excused by examination), and, believe it or not, Biblical history and literature. That calls for an explanation.

Of Wellesley students, 98.8 per cent enter college with some church affiliation. Approximately the same proportion are essentially ignorant of the history and literature of the religious tradition to which they claim allegiance. Wellesley, therefore, maintains an introductory course which all sophomores take to inform them about Biblical history and literature. It is important to notice that this course is intellectually challenging and eminently respected. The student has been introduced to most aspects of her cultural tradition before she comes to

college. This one has been almost totally neglected in her pre-college education. We think she needs it before we can consider her well-informed about the world she lives in. The understanding and practice of religion are traditionally and intentionally an integral part of a Wellesley education.

There are no hard and fast lines between disciplines, but for purposes of convenience departments are classified by groups conforming roughly to the categories of arts, social studies, and sciences. In addition to her free electives, a student must choose two studies from each group. If we could always know in advance that a particular approach to understanding is not fitted to a particular student, I suppose it might be profitable to spare her the so-called waste time involved in trying this method. However, I suspect the senior is more or less typical who chided me once for the failure of the college to introduce her sooner to her burning interest. She entered with a determination to major in French. She found during the first year that the French classes were conducted in French, not English, and this inhibited her and her enthusiasm. Meanwhile she had elected zoölogy to meet a requirement in the science group. At the end of her freshman year she elected a second course in zoölogy and determined to major in that. But we required her to select a social science. She chose economics, and was indignant that by the time she had discovered it as her special interest she had only two more years to study. (Undergraduates find it hard to believe that life goes on after commencement and that much can be learned out of school.)

A survey course in the freshman year might have challenged her interest in economics earlier. On the other hand, she had at the end of her sophomore year a substantial amount of familiarity with French which a survey course could not have given her, and she had a working acquaintance with actual laboratory ex-

perience and a scientist's way of understanding some zoölogical phenomena. She had gone intensively enough into certain areas to know her way about, but the requirement of distribution had necessitated a kind of extensive enlightenment that led her to her field of concentration.

Our students carry five three-hour courses each of their first three years. We periodically discuss reducing the number to four. The student curriculum committee regularly rejects the suggestion because there are so many things people want to learn. Hard-working as undergraduates unquestionably are, they don't kill themselves with overwork. A recent time study showed an average of forty-four hours a week devoted to academic matters. They'll work longer than that when they earn their own living.

When a student has found a field of major interest, she takes a sequence of courses within a department or departments. She is still free to go far afield outside her major to continue the process of inquiry into new areas. It is at this point in the curriculum that we introduce survey courses for relatively mature students who have acquired work habits and can profitably skim over large areas, evaluating conclusions with a somewhat critical sense. Thus our survey courses in art and music and literature are open to upperclassmen without prerequisite. Or perhaps a student takes honors, working in a special field not represented by formal courses.

At the end of the senior year each student takes an examination in the work she has done in her major or honors field. Her degree indicates that she has proved her ability to organize and interpret this large quantity of material as well as the small unit of the semester or year course, and to have her information in usable form when she needs it.

This means that she samples several approaches to learning and goes quite far for a beginner in some one of them. Indeed, a freshman told me recently of a

dinner-table conversation with a senior English major. She said, 'You should have heard her talk on and on about the theatre. She talked about Macbeth and Gielgud, and Hamlet, and everything. Wellesley certainly does teach these girls a lot. They can talk about anything!'

It isn't all talk. By the time a girl passes her 'general' she knows a lot. Moreover, she knows the difference between what she knows and what she doesn't know. In addition, she has cultivated some habits that are as good for an office or kitchen as they are for academic assignments. She has followed the rules of the workshop. The job must be done. It must be done well. It must be done on time. She learns in following these rules to meet externally imposed conditions as she will have to do all the rest of her life. We have been known to have quizzes on the Saturday of a Princeton house party, and examination week once coincided with a Dartmouth Carnival and the hard-hearted faculty didn't change the date. Students were free to miss the academic appointments, but when they did they lost credit just as they will lose pay or the job when they leave the office during a rush of business in years to come.

Rousing and satisfying intellectual curiosity about the world may or may not have immediate practical implications. Vocationalism has been decried as a threat to liberalism. Nobody now objects when the chemistry major takes her liberal arts training into a laboratory assistantship after graduation. English composition may well lead to employment on a newspaper, or economics pave the way to a position in a bank or insurance company. A language major often uses her language in business, and artists are in demand for museum work and elsewhere. An increasing interest in teaching is hailed with enthusiasm. It seems both natural and desirable that since the inception of the College Forum, a public affairs society, as a major organization its president has been a political science student or an economist. The last two

presidents have gone as interns to the Institute of Public Affairs in Washington.

Modern old-line colleges are not afraid of vocationalism as a by-product of a liberal arts course. The only type they fear is vocationalism as an end in itself. When students have learned the lessons the classrooms teach and the others they learn elsewhere, the Placement Office is glad to try to fit them into a vocational niche, but the argument is still maintained that what is learned in the classroom may be valid and vitally important even if it has no vocational implication.

But 'studies are not everything.' Teaching citizenship within the college community is as real a task of Wellesley College as teaching about it in a political science classroom. Offering an opportunity for executive experience is as important a fact of educational policy as offering an academic course in group leadership. Teaching students to become acquainted with and to live happily with fifteen hundred contemporaries from all over the world, differing in creed and race, is as real a responsibility as teaching a course in social psychology. Entertaining faculty guests in student residences, being entertained in faculty homes, finding out how to get a 'date' and how to enjoy life without one, learning how to get along with your family and without it—these are all parts of education, but they are different in character from studying 'The Family as a Social Institution.'

So Wellesley has its community organization, deliberately shaped to contribute to the education of its students, but operating on different rules from the academic workshop. In community affairs students are not apprentices, but citizens. Here older members of the community are advisers, consultants, participants, not instructors. The faculty never waives ultimate responsibility, but college girls have had more experience in living than they have in scholarship, and they can appropriately be treated as col-

leagues sharing real responsibility and learning to be good citizens by building their own community.

It is an abnormal community in that it is made up of a selected population and is deliberately shaped to be conducive to their welfare. It is, however, a superb laboratory for demonstrating good citizenship and its results. It operates on the principle of positive participation rather than negative restraints. It has regulations formulated in joint conference between faculty and student representatives, and these set the outside limits of collegiate propriety and convenience. Within the rules students could live a stupidly exhausting existence. They could be out night after night (after freshman year), they could be away week end after week end, or indeed week after week. They could omit classes altogether for a considerable period and spend their days and their money on living only a little short of riotously. But they don't. If they did I suppose the rules would be changed, but college girls are blessed with more than ordinary intelligence and they use it. When the exception among them fails to use good sense, the college authorities, student and faculty, are in the enviable position of being able to educate her without becoming involved in a disciplinary relationship.

III

Having said so much, I should go on to explain that students are surrounded by official (not to mention unofficial) advisers: student house officers, mature administrative officers as head of each house, faculty residents, faculty visitors, class deans, deans of the college, four physicians (one of them a psychiatrist with common sense), instructors, librarians, the staffs of an information bureau, a placement office, an admission office, an alumnae office. When we convened a Personnel Board to include the administrative officers concerned with the personal adjustment of students (omitting

classroom teachers and heads of houses), we had to assemble a group of twenty-one members. It is a smart girl who can slip through this web of advisory services to escape all accumulated wisdom. When she tries hard enough to succeed at it, she is too headstrong to be saved by a mere rule or she goes so far that she runs into the existing rules. Wellesley prefers advice to command in areas in which students are experienced enough to make intelligent decisions.

Those areas are numerous and varied. The weekly calendar is a revelation of the versatility of undergraduates. Much of undergraduate life is unorganized, but there are organizations galore, many of them coöperating most enthusiastically with corresponding groups in neighboring colleges. Separate colleges for men and women have long since stopped being segregated. In campus organization there is considerable group control. Activities that involve college sponsorship fit into a carefully supervised social schedule designed to make it possible for members of the community to have access to a variety of activities without losing all chance to complete the academic job which is the vocation of the community. Individual students must choose among the organizations those for which they may assume responsibility. This is partly to protect the individual, even more to protect the opportunity of the less aggressive members of the community who have a chance at office if 'natural leaders' are limited in the honors they may assume.

Coöperative thought about the community makes service to it an honor. Women's colleges encourage students to assume responsibility for the fun of it. If a job is rewarded with a money payment the understanding is that it shall go to someone who is earning money for her college expenses. Most of the work of campus organizations is done by volunteers, rewarded only in prestige. Students pay fees as much for admission to participation in the community as to the

classroom. This is symbolized by the fact that student organizations are subsidized from student fees. They submit their budgets as any academic department would do, and the appropriation is approved as part of the administrative expense of the college. This method of sharing expense may not be the best way to teach an individual to budget her money, but it fits in with one long-established tradition. The possession of money is unimportant in the college community. We once tried to raise money for a new building, and asked some students what undergraduates might like to contribute to the cause. They answered that they honestly didn't know which girls had money and which didn't. Money does not affect campus prestige or influence.

Eastern women's colleges have a reputation for being 'rich girls' schools.' Annual fees are high, \$1100 at Wellesley, but anyone who knows the financial background of any entering class knows that college scholarships and subsidies from non-college sources and the self-forgetting sacrifice of devoted relatives and friends make it possible for students of exceedingly limited financial resources to enter. Once in college, such a student can follow the example of any number of impecunious predecessors whose personal ability has carried them to heights of social and academic achievement. Wealth can't even ensure a student the room she wants to live in. The rooms all cost the same, and the wealthiest girl in college may draw the highest number and have the last chance to choose!

We make no pretense of 'integrating' all her experience for any student. We give her all the help we can as she does it for herself. We try, in and out of the classroom, to interest her in the problem of integrating her experiences, intellectual and otherwise, around some unifying principle. We have introduced her to the experience of wise men through the ages who have found inner strength. She has met them in many of her courses — the poets, artists, philosophers, statesmen,

scientists, religionists. She has heard their modern successors in pulpit, lecture hall, discussion group, classroom, and residence.

The college community undertakes to demonstrate the kind of community life we could wish were available for everyone. We deliberately try to establish high standards in music, art, drama, worship, government, friendship, health, relationships between youth and age, rich and poor, native and foreigner, employer and employee. We try to make it all stimulating enough so that when students fail to find those conditions after college they will go to work to create them. We try, and sometimes we fail.

We struggle to avoid race prejudice. We think we achieve marked success, but we wish it were as easy for the three or four Negro students who qualify for admission each year to have a thoroughly happy experience in college as it is for other girls. It isn't. We wish we could assign rooms to freshmen with no anxiety about the reception a Jewish girl will have. We can't ignore pre-college prejudices, and it takes some time to overcome them. We wish everyone recognized her responsibility for the welfare of the community, local and world-wide. It would be gratifying if nobody ever misplaced a library book or took it home without signing for it. It would be desirable to have all residence halls soothingly silent, uncluttered by slamming doors and raucous voices. It would be encouraging if everyone gave money generously to all worthy causes and never forgot to pay her pledge. We prefer stimulating, exhilarating conversation to the prevalent patter about what he said and she said and who wore what.

We don't manage to provide a Harvard boy (or any other kind) for every freshman, and that makes some youngsters very unhappy. I asked a group of freshmen some years ago if it was easy for girls from a distance to get acquainted with boys in neighboring colleges. They assured me that everybody

knew somebody who could get her a 'blind date' once. There seemed to be no problem in finding all the men they could want. Finally one girl closed the discussion by saying, 'Of course you understand we mean that a girl can get a man here if she is the kind that can get one anywhere.' There are unconquered limits in our social program. Moreover, these freshmen were over-optimistic. Not every attractive girl meets as many men as she wants to, and the housing group is not as helpful in achieving that end as is the self-constituted sorority on a coeducational campus. The compensating fact is that life in the woman's college goes on whether or not a 'date' is involved. The girl without an escort is still a part of the college activity.

When the failure to fulfill all our ambitions sometimes seems depressing, it is fair to remember that if all the problems of educational institutions were solved there would be no need of educational institutions. Undergraduates don't do all we want of them, but if they did they would surely have outgrown their undergraduate status.

IV

The advantage of being the president of a college from which one did not graduate is that comments about it can be made without personal implication. The thing that makes me sure the Wellesley program has validity is the fact that it works. The Wellesley women and the graduates of other women's colleges whom I see in action across the length and breadth of the land make me certain of it. Anybody can point out individuals whom the college has failed to teach adequately, but take them all in all and you will find a group of women with a will to serve, knowledge of how to do it, and resources within themselves to keep life interesting for themselves and their associates.

This is the kind of person that the nation is going to need in the perplexing future. There is more than selfish curi-

osity, therefore, involved in the question of what the world situation will do to women's colleges.

They will, of course, share in the financial complications of the next few years. It is hard to anticipate marked reductions in income, since the financing of women's colleges has been marked by rigid economies even in good years. Their thrift has been a sad boomerang. On shoestring resources and with meticulous care they have built beautiful and efficient buildings; their visitors drive by and say they obviously have all the money they need. They don't, but that's another story. Nevertheless, a sense of mission can carry people through periods of drastically curtailed facilities, and if we had to cut appropriations I prophesy that the morale which carried Wellesley once through pretty lean years would keep its program intact. (We should prefer increased gifts!)

The program will undoubtedly be affected by the world situation. The materials used for acquainting students with their world are reconsidered every year. Already course offerings have responded to current interest. For example, the philosophy department recently introduced a course on 'The Philosophical Assumptions of Democracy.' The sociology department presents 'Social Systems in Latin America'; the physics department offers again its course on 'The Automobile: Principles and Construction,' introduced originally during the First World War. The economics department becomes concerned about 'The Economics of Consumption.' Student electives reflect renewed interest in long-established courses. The history of Russia, the Far East, and Latin America becomes especially timely. The Spanish department grows by leaps and bounds. Chemistry, physics, and mathematics have become much more popular as electives. Political science thrives. These are reflections of world interest, as are electives in art, religion, music, and physical education, which students have

been told are important aids in maintaining morale during critical days. The course on group leadership proposes to its students a study of the Wellesley public schools, and students are responding enthusiastically to the opportunity to know how a community works.

The college is a community and will be affected like all communities. Even last year its program included special emergency activities. It is easy to foresee where the emphases will come in 1942. Health will be increasingly important, a responsibility for the sake of the nation. There will be a simplification of entertainments, the collection of larger sums for war relief, organization for national service, increased collaboration with agencies in the town community of which the college is a part. First aid, home nursing, air-raid protection, Red Cross knitting and sewing, typing, recreational leadership — all sorts of techniques for community usefulness will undoubtedly enter this community as they have all others in the nation. Already the Zone Wardens, the first-aid stations and communication centres, are ready for action in emergencies.

Students are ready for whatever demands the nation makes upon them. They will exert the right and duty of intelligent citizens to discuss issues. They live in a community where anything is discussible. Some of them will advance absurd ideas, and they will expect to be challenged to examine their premises and conclusions. They will not expect their faculty friends to be shocked by theories or to scold them for ideas, however mistaken, if they are subjected to sincere consideration. They will expect to have sound alternative suggestions presented, for they know that their college community is dedicated to the search for truth about the world we live in. Students expect to be taken seriously, but not to have their ideas considered by themselves or anyone else as conclusive. That is a characteristic of the college community which differentiates it from

too many others. It is the reason college officers welcome polls of student opinion and regret their widespread publicity. We are more impressed by what students do than by what they say, and we see them in their college communities, and afterward, demonstrating their basic allegiance to the values that motivate their colleges. Truth, beauty, and goodness mean more to students than they sometimes realize.

The outbreak of the struggle on American soil marked the beginning of a new era in women's colleges as everywhere else in American life. Its immediate effects on organizational procedure will not be so drastic as in men's colleges. We do not propose to graduate seniors early or to introduce military courses into the curriculum, but within the first week of war we felt its effect on student motivation. These girls are eager to carry their share of the nation's load.

That they must serve by standing and waiting and working undramatically is tantalizing. Their willingness to forgo excitement in order to enhance their future usefulness is a measure of their sincere desire to serve their nation.

During the Middle Ages the monasteries preserved the culture that flowered again in the Renaissance. It may well be that the colleges of the country will perform that conservative function in these troubled times. The women's colleges have more opportunity to do it than any others, since their members are less apt to be called into full-time military service. By their preservation of the understanding of the past, their maintenance of the scholar's objectivity, his accuracy, his insistence on truth, his recognition of the value of contemplation as well as of overt action, they will serve their nation. If even a small group of young women can be spared from the urgent, full-time employment in the art of war to learn the arts of age-long value, the nation will be strengthened in the years ahead. It is for these values that the struggle is on.

'HOME IS THE HUNTER'

BY JOHN MASON BROWN

BEING listened to by strangers in public for five weeks on end can work amazing changes in the quietest soul. Although you may have left home a person interested in conversation, when next you are heard from there you are apt to be a monologist. You do not know this. But your friends do. And, being friends, they are quick to tell you.

People have been kind to you — incredibly kind. They have lunched you, dined you, met you at trains, interviewed you, driven you about in their cars, shown you the sights, granted you the run of their homes, and given parties for you even after you have had your say. In a thousand flattering ways they have applied helium to your vanity. No wonder you return home a Pekingese acting like a lion.

Above everything else, people have listened to you. A Bedouin or so may have bobbed up here or there who wandered out during your sandstorm of words. But you have grown accustomed to excusing yourself, even if you cannot quite forgive them. 'Diabetics, no doubt,' you have comforted yourself by thinking, without pausing for an adjective. A couple of Rip Van Winkles may have dozed off during one of your talks. 'Up too late last night,' you have said to yourself, looking quickly to the other side of the auditorium. A big man walked out suddenly in the middle of your favorite paragraph. 'A doctor on emergency call,' you thought.

Still — people have listened. They have listened for an hour or more.

They have had to — the doors were shut. You forget this, although they may not. What is more, these same good listening people have not interrupted you. They have been too polite, too embarrassed, too kind to do so. You forget this also. And, forgetting it, you have got so that you can't ask for the salt without acting as if you had swallowed a Public Address System.

But your friends are not like those good listening people. They are different — bruisingly different. There is not an upturned face among them.

The deflation they have in store for you is never delayed for long. It sets in with merciless swiftness soon after your train has returned you to the Pennsylvania Station in New York. As a rule the first impact of this deflation is felt at the dinner party which your wife, in the sweetness of her heart, has arranged for you a day or so after your return. When it comes, it comes with a bang.

'I've asked some people for dinner tonight,' she says. 'Just a few old friends who are crazy to hear about your trip.'

'Good,' you reply, eager to be with them once again, and, being with them, share your impressions of the country.

They arrive, these old friends: Tom, Dick, and Harry; Mary, Helen, and Jane. And they seem almost as glad to see you as you are to see them.

The cocktail hour goes off well enough. It is filled with those antiphonal cries of 'How are you?' — 'Did you know?' — 'Have you heard?' which always pass for answers at such a time. You are glad

you took that nap in the afternoon. You wanted to be in good form this evening. After all, you invariably try to get a nap before a lecture. That's only fair to the audience, and a means, though not so sure as one might wish, of keeping them from napping when you are awake.

The first twenty minutes have been so crowded with salutations, exchanged largely between your friends rather than addressed to you, that you decide they must all have been away on trips too. But no — it seems they just have not seen each other for two or three days. And the fodder for much good talk can be garnered in that time — subjects pressing because of their immediacy, dear because of their triviality, absorbing because no other people would find them so. What is said to and of those present, and especially about others not there, may be neither witty nor deserved. But it is cherished nonetheless because of the details which each line adds to portraits, long since familiar, that can never be finished inasmuch as they are always being joyously reworked.

Just as private affairs are the public property of intimates, so world events lose their public quality among good friends. They too are reduced to personal terms. They too become part of a quick exchange, so derived from experiences tangled and shared, so filled with sudden allusions and transitions which assume that all explanations are unnecessary, and so alive with insults — professional as well as personal — which only friendship could endure or provoke, that a stranger, wandering into such a closed corporation, would need to have at least half of what is said there decoded for him.

The talk is fast and furious. To outsiders it might seem as silly as other people do when you have watched them dancing without being able to hear the music. You can hear this babble, however, and to you it is a welcome tune. 'Later,' you keep saying to yourself, 'later. My time will come!'

Anyway, you have been busy. As a matter of fact, you have been so busy mixing drinks and filling glasses that your hands have scarcely left the cocktail shaker. In other words, you have been luckier than you know. For this means that no one has been able to observe the operative dimensions your gestures have taken on.

It is not until shortly before dinner is announced that the first lighted cigarette is put to the balloon which is you. Harry has asked you, when you have chanced to encounter him as he moves with ease from what you have found to be one closed circle to another, 'What is the Middle West thinking?'

Just when you are about to answer by telling him what you think the Middle West is thinking, which amounts to the same thing as telling him what you were thinking in the Middle West, and before you notice that Harry has turned to Helen to ask her about a book which has come out two days before, your index finger has, from sheer force of habit, shot up like a coastal gun.

'Oh, Dr. Munyon, I presume,' you hear Dick laughing behind you, as he approaches with an empty glass. Although you pretend not to notice this, from then on whenever possible you either sit on your hands or dig them deep into your pockets.

When the first course is over, a course devoted largely at your end of the table to hearing about Jane's two children, Tom, who is seated one down from Jane on your left, has begun to eye her with an expression worthy of Herod.

Tom's chance to escape from Jane's nursery comes when Jane, from sheer hoarseness, has finally been compelled to take a drink of water in the middle of some saga about what little Henry, aged four, said to Wendell Willkie when he happened to see him on Fifth Avenue. Later you discover, because Jane is not lacking in conversational stamina, that little Henry's uproarious remark was 'Who is that man, Marmee?' But that

is much later. Tom, blessed always with enviable luck, never hears it.

'What about Texas and the Defense Program down there?' he asks the minute he sees the glass raised to Jane's lips.

Texas! Here at last is your chance. You may not know much about the Defense Program down there, but it offers you that springboard for which you have been longing. You have a lot to say about Texas. You love Texas. Jane and Helen are listening. So, in a minute, is Harry. So, before too long, is the whole table. Hitler is stopped. No one offers Churchill, Roosevelt, or Wavell free advice. The war is halted. Peace reigns.

This attentive silence is more like it. This is what you have grown accustomed to. This is what you have been deceived into believing you can command at the drop of a sentence. Without being aware of it, you have pushed your head back a little and rested your hands on the table as if it were the lectern. Texas is a state you could talk about by the hour. But just when you are beginning to do so Harry cries, 'All right, Brown, all right. Get down off the platform, will you? Remember, you're not being paid now.'

Everyone laughs like Little Audrey at this. You try to force a laugh, too. But you haven't really enjoyed it. It is almost harder to control a blush than your temper. You comfort yourself by thinking you have at least kept the latter in fair check. Moreover, as time has gone on, you have not derived true pleasure from those shouts of 'Hire a hall!' — 'Got your slides with you?' — 'Is there a Helen Hokinson in the house?' — 'When's your next lecture?' which have greeted almost everything you have said that has involved a considered opinion.

Even when the men are alone, and you would think the state of the nation would be very much their concern, you can't help realizing that your repertory of anecdotes is strangely limited, inasmuch as you remember that some of the best ones you have been telling around the

country as your own were originally told you by these same friends.

Sadly but slowly you become aware that no one wants to hear about those things which recently have loomed large in your life. Your friends show only the mildest interest in the people on the road that you have liked and they have never known. They listen with their lids drooping like the films which can gather over a parrot's eyes as you talk to them of cities they have neither visited nor planned to go to. They are frankly bored with those statistics about trains and hotels, auditoriums and audiences, chairmen and hosts, which are endlessly fascinating to all lecturers, and create a happy freemasonry among those who have ever gone on such tours.

All trips are, of course, unsharable, as everyone who has ever taken one soon learns to his sorrow. Only the novices, the bores, and the pith-helmet boys persist in trying to share them. But lecture tours are more unsharable than any other journeys. When you return from the others, your mistake is trying to bring back what you have seen. When you return from a lecture tour, your all-unconscious error is trying to bring back what you have tried to be. This is far worse, and naturally not only more objectionable but more unforgivable.

Little by little, out of hurt feelings and bewilderment, you find yourself, as the evening progresses, reduced to monosyllables — then to short 'humphs' which Indians alone would understand. But before that first reunion is over you forget that you are hurt. You understand more completely than you ever thought you would how a defeated candidate must feel when he returns home.

Suddenly you are listening. Yes, really listening. What is more, you are enjoying it. Plank by plank, you have been robbed of your platform manner. But even as you listen you keep hoping to yourself that some day, somewhere, some kind people will perhaps be willing to listen to you again.

THE COMMUNITY

The Seed Bed of Society

BY ARTHUR E. MORGAN

I

IN New Mexico there are Pueblo Indian irrigation canals said to have been in use since before Columbus. The native historian of one of these Indian villages or pueblos repeated for me a part of the annals of his people. Twenty-two generations (more than four hundred years) after the pueblo was established, he said, word came from the East that strange men had appeared. Their faces were white as snow, and they lived in houses built on boats, and the boats had wings. Thus this compact village of a few hundred people had a record of continuous, organized community life in one location for about nine hundred years.

Over most of the world the village is an ancient institution, often with a history extending into the dim past, sometimes thousands of years, outlasting kingdoms and dynasties. Modern and ancient ways exist there side by side; and often contemporary informal democratic village government, well adapted to its purpose, differs little from that of the dawn of history.

The village has played a dominant part in the destinies of men. During the million years, more or less, which anthropologists ascribe to the life of mankind, so far as we know most of our ancestors lived in small groups of from a few dozen to a few hundred persons. Only when necessity compelled did they resort to isolated dwellings. The city and the separate farm home, so important in

American life, have had a relatively small part in human affairs.

Cities have existed only during the past ten or twenty thousand years — for but one or two per cent of the life of the race — and many of them were but overgrown villages. During the Middle Ages most 'cities' of Europe were self-sustaining agricultural villages. Rome was then a town of about ten thousand, and for centuries scarcely a city in all Europe had a greater population.

Even today most city dwellers are children or grandchildren of rural people. When my grandfather was born only six American cities had as many as eight thousand inhabitants. Even now probably three quarters of the human race live in villages. There are estimated to be two million villages in Asia, while probably more than half of all Europeans are villagers.

Small communities are the sources of city populations. Large cities have such low birth rates that if their population were not renewed from outside they would almost disappear in four or five generations. Small communities greatly affect social leadership. A leader is a person of unusual native vigor, intelligence, or personality, who uses that superiority to give expression to the character he acquired from family and community. Great men may make history, but the kind of history they make is determined chiefly by their childhood

environment. Napoleon as a boy on the faction-ridden, brigand-infested island of Corsica learned the local ways of intrigue, feud, and ambition. When he was well-nigh master of Europe, enthroning and dethroning kings, the ways of the Corsican village ruled his life. A similar story might be told of nearly every present-day European dictator.

II

The ancient village was not just a collection of families, each going its own way, as is so common in America. Except where blighted by war and conquest, it was a closely organized association of people who lived and worked together for common ends, with mutual good will, respect, and tolerance, sharing dangers and hopes. Since the members all knew each other intimately, dishonesty did not succeed. The villagers had common standards, a common background, a community of memory and association. They helped each other and shared the common lot, not as charity, but as the natural course of community life. That is what we mean by community. Ancient villages varied greatly, and not every one had all those characteristics. Yet by and large they justified this description, just as the family is properly referred to as a unit of unselfish coöperation, though not all families exemplify that trait.

Controlling factors of civilization are not art, business, science, government. These are its fruits. The roots of civilization are elemental traits — good will, neighborliness, fair play, courage, tolerance, open-minded inquiry, patience. A people rich in these qualities will develop a great civilization, with great art, science, industry, government. If the basic qualities fade, then, no matter how great the wealth, how brilliant the learning, how polished the culture, that civilization will crumble.

These finer underlying traits, which we recognize as the essence of civiliza-

tion, are not inborn; neither are they best acquired in rough-and-tumble business or political life. They are learned in the intimate, friendly world of the family and the small community, usually by the time one is ten or twelve, and by unconscious imitation, as one learns the mother tongue. Only as such traits have opportunity to grow in the kindly, protective shelter of family and small community, where there is intimate acquaintance, and also mutual confidence, do they become vigorous and mature enough to survive. Unless supported by the surrounding community, the single family generally is too small a unit to maintain fine standards.

Growth of civilized traits has been very slow. Such attitudes as fair play, mutual confidence, and good will may have been thousands of years in development. Those from whom we learned them, be they parents, neighbors, teachers, or companions, did not originate them, but caught them from others, and so from time immemorial. If the social thread of community by which they are preserved and passed on should be broken, other thousands of years might be necessary for their renewal. The small community, along with the family, is the chief source, as well as the principal preserver and transmitter, of these finer threads of cultural inheritance.

III

The idea of inevitable progress — ‘onward and upward forever’ — has received many staggering shocks. ‘Survival of the fittest’ applies only to the ‘fittest under the particular existing conditions.’ In an uncivilized society a civilized man may be unfit. Christianity bears the name of a civilized man who died because of his unfitness, but who presented a pattern of excellence.

The English-speaking world is convinced that extension of the Nazi or Communist program would result in a deterioration of life and society. Yet

today is not the first time that more excellent human cultures have been threatened with submergence by crude violence of less excellent societies. During the very long periods when the prevailing type of social organization was the small community, a high degree and fine quality of social adjustment were achieved within the limits of the ancient village.

The age of force and strategy, of conquest, of empire, and of feudalism, swept over and submerged this ancient community life. The democratic equality, the good will and coöperativeness, of communities the world over were largely displaced by dictatorship and serfdom. Men's minds were subjected to indoctrination and propaganda. The common man became the tool of his master, bound to the soil. Deceit, intrigue, and shrewdness — the spirit of Machiavelli — often prevailed over simple honesty. Yet the ancient spirit of community was not killed. Nearly everywhere it survived in small groups and close to the soil, as the very life principle of society, without which society would disintegrate.

There were, it is true, serious limitations to that old community culture. Good will often did not extend to other communities; village life tended to be provincial; men were burdened by superstitions and taboos. The village was too small a unit to fulfill the destinies of human society. Yet that old village culture produced some of the finest qualities the race has known.

Many of the ideals which the Western world holds as most precious are survivals from the ancient community way of life. The burden of the Hebrew prophet's message, good will and brotherhood, which flowered in Christian teaching, was not a new revelation, but a resurgence and extension of ancient community ways in the hills of Palestine. The democracy of Switzerland, which became a beacon light to the modern world, did not originate when men of

the forest cantons tore down the baron's castle six hundred and fifty years ago. Those Swiss communities were fighting to preserve their ancient democratic way of life, which in their mountain retreats never had succumbed to feudalism. Religious democracy, which has been a potent school for political democracy, has a similar history. The pre-Reformation reformers, when they undertook to make their church government and their way of life conform to New Testament descriptions of early Christianity, were better able to do so because the primitive community life about them had much the same pattern. When we trace back democratically governed religious groups — the Mennonites, the Baptists in their Swiss and German origins, the Quakers, the Presbyterians, the Congregationalists — we generally find that they originated in areas where these early community ways still lived, close to the soil, areas such as the valleys of Switzerland, the Black Forest of Germany, and rural Holland, England, and Scotland. The primitive Christian society they undertook to copy was also the primitive community life of the Mediterranean regions which the early Christians continued in their own organization.

Today, as in the ancient past, the small community is the home, the refuge, the seed bed, of some of the finest qualities of civilization. But, just as the precious values of the ancient community were submerged and largely destroyed by empire and feudalism, so the present-day community with its invaluable cultural tradition is being dissolved, diluted, and submerged by modern technology, commercialism, mass production, and centralized government. Should that process not be checked, a great cultural tradition may be largely lost.

IV

Statesmen and warriors seldom create issues. More often they seize upon those that are becoming dominant, and pre-

cariously hang on to them or ride them, guide or misguide them, through their later stages. There are few more alluring myths in all history than that social wrongs can be set right in one mighty effort directed by great organizing genius at the top. Neither the size and complexity of the task, nor the record of failure, has ended that romantic dream.

The evil results of this myth appear not only in the rise of an Alexander, a Napoleon, a Hitler, but also in competition for power and prominence the world over. The mass of people are influenced to hold in low regard the self-mastery of their own lives, and to focus attention on great programs initiated in centres of government and industry. How often have the seemingly colossal achievements of such programs crumbled away by subsidence of the foundations!

World events of today and tomorrow took their determining directions further back in the past than we realize; and the work of today, if in accord with fundamental realities, will come to full fruition further in the future than we supposed. When events are full grown, herculean effort may change them but slightly. How little change in the current of human affairs, except in spiritual disorganization and exhaustion, was made by the prodigious efforts of the First World War!

Yet very moderate powers, wisely used in harmony with the nature of things, may have profound effect on the more distant future. The free men in obscure Swiss valleys who kept alive the ancient tradition of democratic life may have had more enduring influence than the heads of the Holy Roman Empire. Excellence may be more significant than bigness.

Should people of serious purpose realize the extent to which the local community is the seed bed of civilization, the source of basic character and culture as well as the medium for their preservation and transmission, then,

within their communities, they might be sowing the seeds and cultivating the growth of a better future. The slowness of this process may seem discouraging, yet to expect quicker results may be wishful dreaming — a common cause of cynical despair. One sees everywhere frustration and disillusionment of young people as they measure their small individual powers against vast world currents. Could they see clearly the process by which the future is made, they would have compelling reasons for a sense of significance and validity for their lives.

Great civilizations rise and fall, and when they fall it is to the level of the small rural communities. In England of the year 1500, a brilliant group of Oxford reformers seemed to usher in a new day of free, liberal thought. There was Erasmus, the counselor of kings; Thomas More, High Chancellor of England; Colet, leader of the group, and dean of St. Paul's; and Lilly, head of St. Paul's School. Yet in less than a generation their movement had faded away, almost as though it never had been. The great tradition of political and religious freedom survived in England largely because Wyclif, one of the greatest spirits England ever knew, had sent his Lollard preachers through the villages, arousing the old democratic community spirit as the essence of a new vision.

Many times in history urban civilizations have broken down, leaving society to rebuild, largely from the village level. Should there be a breakdown in the present social order, the small community is the seed bed from which a new order would have to grow. If it now deteriorates by neglect and by being robbed of its best quality, the new order will not be good.

V

Though the art and practice of community life are vital to social progress, yet during historic times the small community nearly always has been neglected.

All rural America has been skimmed of its material wealth and of its human quality to feed the insatiable city. The small community has been despised as something to escape from to the larger better life of the city. The typical American farm village has become little more than a local market, and a location for church and school. The mining town has been drearier still — rows of shacks along the sides of a gully; and the usual factory town has been little better. It is an epitome of the old story of neglect and exploitation of the small community; the killing of the goose that lays the golden egg. Do we not have here one of the major causes of the slow progress of humanity in civilization?

Too often the typical American small town or village no longer is a community, but only a small city, the citizens largely going their individual ways. This tendency to disappearance of the community in present-day life is a disturbing phenomenon of modern history. It constitutes an historic crisis.

The community need not disappear. The very changes which are destroying it have put into our hands means for re-creating it in a finer pattern. Seldom in modern times has the small community caught a glimpse of its possibilities. Today for the first time it can be abreast or ahead of the city in convenience of living. If we use the present time of social and economic transition as an opportunity, the disappearance of the old community need be no disaster. But there is little time to lose, for with its passing some fine cultural traditions are being broken; and, with human culture as with the human breed, if we have no children we cannot transmit our inheritance to grandchildren.

If many young people, searching for careers of significance and adventure, should see the small community as the place where basic human culture is preserved and transmitted, and should seek careers there, the results might be more important than the failure or success of

any present political or economic movement, and enduring satisfactions along the way might be very real. Many rural callings provide economic footholds for such careers.

Suppose a man or woman, living in a small community, wishes to work for its development. What can he or she do? First it is necessary to get a clear vision of the new community as an all-round, well-proportioned society in which human relations are fine and sound and where all the elemental needs of men can be met, and of its place in the larger society of mankind. The poverty of the average small American town or village is not wholly due to shortcomings of economic and political systems. In large part it results from lack of such a vision.

There are many opportunities for community service. Much work is needed in community economics. Fine culture does not thrive best amid starvation or squalor. The community needs help to appraise its economic needs and resources, to plan through the years to achieve sound economic balance. There are unfilled needs for community services the supplying of which would provide community careers and make the community a more satisfactory place to live in. There are similar opportunities in vocational guidance, in recreation, in developing a community library, in musical and dramatic programs, in working out recognized community ethics and standards, in promoting community health, and in improving public administration.

VI

America is waking to the meaning of the community, and to its present danger. During the last decade perhaps three hundred communities in the United States, about half of them in California, have established Community Councils. Each socially-minded organization in a community — such as the Parent-Teachers Association, the Chamber of Commerce, the service clubs, the trades

and labor council, the Y. M. C. A., the several churches, the juvenile court, and the school board — appoints one member to a central council. Through suitable committees this organization keeps in touch with all vital community interests, brings neglected issues to the attention of those responsible or to the public, or directly undertakes the necessary service. This new invention of democracy promises to be a powerful instrument for community welfare, though as yet its workings often are crude, superficial, and restricted.

Two or three years ago the Federal Farm Security Administration sent a man through Europe to discover ways to vitalize community life. On his return he stated that the neighborhood advisory councils of the Ohio Farm Bureau are a more promising development of community spirit than anything he found abroad. A dozen national organizations see small community interests as among their most vital concerns, and sociologists are studying the small community as never before.

But it is in American communities themselves that some of the most encouraging developments are taking place. Many country ministers are helping to build up their communities in health, housing, and income, and especially in neighborly community spirit. The people of an Ohio village of five hundred, together with surrounding farmers, found community coöperation so interesting that in ten years theirs has become a pioneer in American community life. In a Nevada desert town of two thousand a community council is coördinating a wide variety of social projects. A farm village of thirty-five hundred in Oklahoma has made itself into a live, progressive community, not through formal organizations, but by meeting its various problems as friends, neighbors, and fellow citizens. In a thousand towns and villages, individuals and small groups are doing what they can to make their communities interesting and productive.

Perhaps in the case of the small community it has been darkest just before dawn.

Among interesting American communities are those that have a continuous tradition from ancient pre-feudal democratic communities of Europe. At Valdese, North Carolina, is a community of Waldensians, that long-persecuted brotherhood of primitive, democratically governed Christians who for nearly a thousand years have had a precarious survival in the high southern Alps. Tricked into buying some of the most worthless clay hills in North Carolina, by simple honesty, coöperation, and hard work they turned the barren hills into such an area of productiveness that they are now greatly outnumbered by people who have come to their community to share their stable prosperity.

Mennonite communities in America continue the ancient tradition of political and religious democracy from Swiss and Dutch villages. After four hundred years of tenacious adherence to the democratic community ways of their fathers, they display a vigorous spirit of neighborliness and coöperation, which finds numberless expressions in informal friendly services as well as in formal coöperatives for life, fire, and storm insurance, for administration of orphans' estates, for banks and trust companies, for community elevators and stores, for registered breeding stock, and in various other ways.

New England town government was a lineal descendant of close-to-the-soil political and religious democracy of England, Holland, and Switzerland. A curious offshoot of New England is Mormonism. Followers of Vermont-born Joseph Smith took New England democratic community tradition, and in the West, somewhat removed from machine-age compulsions, developed organized rural community living to a higher level than most of America has known.

In the Tennessee mountains a group of Swiss farmers, from Alpine communities that never had succumbed to feudalism,

established a settlement seventy years ago, on land so poor that it was largely abandoned. Through intelligent, neighborly coöperation, after the manner of old Swiss democratic communities, they turned this into the most productive tract in the region. After three generations the community spirit still thrives, vigorous and strong enough to hold many of the best young people.

VII

The community must achieve a common view of a total way of life, and a common discipline. Only to the extent that it does so is it actually a community. That way of life must grow by the democratic process of voluntary general agreement. It will be influenced by leadership, both local and general, by knowledge of what other communities have done, by literature, art, science, and religion, and by everyday experience. Never will a community be united on everything, yet it must be aware of the standards on which it is substantially united, and which its members can be expected to support. In the ancient community the common way of life was fully understood, deeply entrenched, and generally observed; so questions arose only in marginal cases. The flux of modern life has largely erased these common values from the community mind. They must be reëstablished by conscious, intelligent, critical search, and by example and teaching.

Community well-being requires a spirit of open, full, free inquiry, with no organization or sect claiming supreme merit, authority, or revelation, or plotting to capture community loyalty for its peculiar doctrines. Many an American community has had its unity disrupted by the strategy of political or religious ideologies, some claiming to be sole repositories of truth. A real community can emerge only when there is sincere recognition of the fact that ultimate truth or wisdom is not given to any

sect or class or organization, but that all alike should be open-minded seekers.

The new community can be something new under the sun. It can recover the precious qualities of the old, the fellow feeling, acquaintance, good will, mutual respect, the planning and working together for common ends. But it need not lose the contributions of the new day. It can escape the narrowness and provincialism of the old village. It must have clearinghouses for the exchange of ideas and experience.

The new community will not try to monopolize the whole life of its members, as did the ancient village. While it endeavors to satisfy those cravings for common purpose and united neighborly effort which modern life neglects, its members will use many other forms of association — national societies, trade-unions, churches, universities, nationwide industries, and the national government. While coöperating heartily with various federal agencies, it will firmly maintain its individuality and autonomy, and will not be swallowed up in grasping, characterless uniformity of far-flung, centralized government bureaucracy. The community, if it is wise and vigorous, need not be eclipsed, but can be richer, sounder, finer, for its contacts with the wide world. For thousands of young people who seek a way to leave their imprint on their own and on future times, there is room to take part in such adventures. But neither that vision nor general interest in it will come suddenly. It must be slowly won.

For the preservation and transmission of the fundamentals of civilization, vigorous, wholesome community life is imperative. Unless many people live and work in the intimate relationships of community life, there never can emerge a truly unified nation, or a community of mankind. If I do not love my neighbor whom I know, how can I love the human race, which is but an abstraction? If I have not learned to work with a few people, how can I be effective with many?

THE SNOW ANGELS

BY LOUISE McNEILL

MARTIN, Stevie, and Joe and I,
Four in our family long ago,
One winter day on the road to school,
Boot-top high through a field of snow,
Stopped by the old black walnut tree;
And Joe and Martin and I, all three,
Lay on our backs in a laughing row,
Our white forms printed: the tall one Joe,
Mart beside him, the fat one me.
Then we called to Stevie, 'Look yonder, see,
Angels resting beneath the tree!'

But Steve had paused by the open spring,
Down on his knees in the yellow mud,
Watching his face in the troubled pool
Where the snow birds drank and the cattle trod —
'Look, Steve, *angels!*' But he just stepped
His muddy tracks where the angels slept.

Martin, Stevie, and Joe and I,
Four in our family, long ago,
Then three white winds past the walnut tree —
Joe and Martin and I, all three.
For pollen scatters; the leaf must blow;
The winged seed follow the squall of snow —
The winged seed follow, the field lie clear.
(Mart in China, a card last year —
Joe in Houston, a yacht and plane —
And here by the mirror I lift my hands,
Binding my throat with a velvet chain —
The skin of my throat and the sharpening bone.)

Wind past the tree and the snow-whirls blown —
In the hands of our angels the wheat seed sown;
Over their bodies the wheat stalks mown.

But Stevie's tracks from the meadow spring
Still break the stubble and print the clay,
And his steps zigzag with the cradle's swing
So near that place where the angels lay.

One earth-born shape with his shoulders low —
Four in our family, long ago.

TO BE LOVED WHEN OLD

BY FRANCES LESTER WARNER

I

IT may be argued that in the circle of acquaintance I know best I have been uncommonly fortunate in my old ladies. I have, and in my old gentlemen as well. They have happened to be durable individualities with a stratagem for life and a gift for expressive language.

Once I overheard a married pair of them, in vacation at Cape Cod, having a stormy session on their lawn. The husband, aged eighty-six, was striding across the greensward with a loaded wheelbarrow in the noonday sun, and his tiny wife, aged eighty, was commanding him to desist. Instead of desisting, he was resisting. She had the wider vocabulary; he had the wheelbarrow.

At length, having fired off her most elaborate ammunition at him, she fell back on simple birdshot. 'You come in this minute!' she told him, spacing her syllables distinctly. 'I want you to come right in out of the hot sun.'

'Don't try to hurry me, Anne,' he admonished her, quickening his march to a run. 'You only make me be slower.'

'I'm not trying to hurry you!' she called after him in vexation. 'I'm trying to stop you! You'll get a stroke.'

'No, I won't,' he assured her, following his wheelbarrow down the slope at a gallop until he reached what he considered a safe distance. There he paused, turned around, made a megaphone of his hands, and raised his voice to platform proportions. 'Oh, Anne!' he trumpeted for the neighborhood to hear.

'Oh, Anne! You treat me as if I were in my *hundreds*!'

Whereupon he vanished into the lower garden to work in peace.

To be loved when old is not a necessity, but it is a compliment. Normally, in our eighties, our nineties, and our hundreds, the most important loves of our life are in the past, unless by rare good luck a few of them are still traveling alongside, growing elderly too. In any case, great numbers of our choicest friends are no longer close at hand. An expert with little children once said she could always recognize the sound of a little child's crying when the older boys had run away and left him. She said there is a peculiarly broken-hearted wail that a child makes when the others have disappeared down the road too fast for him to follow. Similarly, at the other end of life, we feel a peculiar sort of grieving when our friends have gone too far ahead, leaving us on the road.

'Don't you dare to die!' wrote one lively old lady to another. 'At this late date I can't spare you, not possibly. Don't you die till I do!'

Lifelong friendships like that are irreplaceable, and from this point of view extreme old age is always a calamity; but with younger people listening all about us we do not need to rub that in.

What is it that makes an elderly person adorable to newcomers on this planet, years after the older settlers he knew in youth have stepped along? I

confess to an overwhelming curiosity about the traits that have carried my elderly through to the last brink with love of younger persons all around them. By long observation I think I have detected four categories of fine traits — not wild, queer traits, exotic or blue-moonish, but cultivated flowers of character.

The first of these is the gift for the contemporary moment.

Go to see my friend who remembers Lincoln, for instance. Does she ask you why you do not come to see her oftener? Or whether you were bored by such an old lady last time you came and therefore stayed away? Or does she even say she has missed you and been lonesome? For all she says on these embarrassing topics, you might have been spending your life like a cricket on her hearth. She starts right in where she is, and where you are; and the warm, cozy present moment is yours with her — just you two jubilantly together, your hostess and you alone. Such luck that nobody else happened to be there at the time of your call! If you tell her some funny gossip she laughs till she gasps with merriment, and she has no qualms about regaling you with a choice morsel in return. Unseemly gossip is not her dish, but everyone tells her the most lovable funny doings of a wide and agitated area. If you want the most entertaining news of five counties, with no unfair aspersions on anyone's fair name, treat yourself to an afternoon call.

Is this lady, you ask yourself, concerned with small fry such as we are, when she remembers Lincoln? We all know the answer to that one. She's concerned, and no mistake. After all, it was somebody else who told you that she remembered Lincoln.

She has sized you up as a contemporary — not seeing you as you were when you were a child in the neighborhood, and not seeing you as you might be if you could be made over; but seeing you as you are in the present, where she dwells.

II

The gift for the contemporary moment can be enhanced by a second quality: the gift of discrimination. This means a shrewd eye for human values.

Suppose you have delivered a speech on a great occasion, and an elderly gentleman, who knew everybody's grandfather, was present. He puts out his hand to you afterwards in congratulation, and he does not tell you (though your great-uncle's voice haunted him all through your talk) that you are exactly like your great-uncle. He knows, discriminatingly, that you are no such thing, let your voice ring in the rafters with uncle's very tone quality though it may. He has looked you over sharply for variations and permutations, and consequently he does not make you feel that to him you are only Colonel Broncho's nephew. To him you are your own complicated self, more interesting for your relationships, but still yourself alone. And he liked your speech.

It is only in his heart of hearts that you spoke in the remembered accents of that grand old ghost. Some other time perhaps, when you happen to ask him about your uncle the Colonel, he will give you a newspaper clipping descriptive of his exploits, and he may remark casually, 'I think you'd like old Broncho if you knew him now. Sometimes your voice makes me think of him. He could fill a big hall without an amplifier just as you can.'

And you, who in childhood were only too well aware that the Colonel considered you a doubtful blessing underfoot, get a new feeling of kinship with your uncle. But you are never for a moment made to feel that you are only a dim echo of old days, when your uncle, who had been a Rough Rider before he was an officer, was young.

Neither are you made to feel that you are the scion of a dwindling generation. Your great-uncle's friend has seen that you have gone your uncle one better in

the chief thing you have in common — your speech — and he does not try to blink that fact. His discriminating ear and eye give him too much pleasure for him to disregard the news they bring him — news of a fine fresh humanity coming on.

III

And speaking of generations leads me straight to my next category of good traits, the simplest and most easily cultivated of them all. The rule for it is this: Never dwell on any split between the so-called 'generations.'

The actual line of cleavage in humanity is not a matter between the generations at all. Generations are too unevenly 'staggered' in time for one thing, and each within itself is thoroughly mixed. Your naturally congenial friends are found all over the lot among them, and if you don't keep pointing out that you are elderly you save a great deal of wear and tear on all concerned.

Take the next-to-the-oldest grandmother in my favorite collection, for instance. I might as well reveal at the outset that this grandmother was my own. She lived to be eighty-nine without cutting us off from her confidence. In return, when any of us happened to be in need of an audience, we went up to her house to unfold.

It happened one time that a visitor had come to dine with our parents. She had requested that we children should be on view, but we had been warned by our mother not to try to talk. My small brother and sister did not like our guest very well, and devoted themselves exclusively to their meal. I did not like our visitor either, for she always called me 'Fanny,' an endearment I never did appreciate; and moreover she pronounced it 'Fanneh,' just as she always pronounced 'funny' as if it were spelled 'funneh.' But I was slightly the senior child in our family, and I felt responsible. If my brother and sister were looking so inattentive, I thought the least I could

do was to register a little extra cordiality on behalf of our little flock.

Every time our visitor glanced at me as she talked, I smiled at her encouragingly; and as time went on my smile grew more strained, more and more wide and dutiful, until by the time the dessert was being brought on my smile was so wide and stiffened that it made my ears ache. Our guest kept looking at me, and I kept smiling at her, until all at once she broke off her chat with my father and addressed me solely.

'Fanneh, my dear!' she began, in the instructive tones of one who has always used her critical faculty as an instrument of social improvement. 'Fanneh! Your mouth is rather pretteh when it is in repose, but it won't bear the least bit of *stretching*.'

I took a three-inch tuck in my smile so promptly that my brother and sister nearly slid under the table. Not one of us dared to look at another of us during that dessert. Like so many tightly corked little bottles of ginger pop, we sat demurely containing our fizz. But as soon after supper as we could suitably be excused we knew what we must do. We must find a safe place where we could laugh, well out of earshot, so that our guest could not overhear us howling. Up the street to our grandmother's house we trotted for this purpose, deciding as we ran which of us should edify our grandmother with the tale. We all agreed that the story was really mine, and that I should be allowed to tell it first. But my brother spoke for the privilege of showing our grandmother how I had looked — how far I had unfurled my smile, and with what a sudden jerk I had reefed it in. My sister said she would be our critical guest; we had all conned her speech until we knew it permanently by heart.

At our performance, our grandmother was in stitches. She had to take off her glasses and dry them when we finished, for she too had known some of the critical sayings of this quotable guest.

Did our grandmother make us feel that we were disrespectfully impersonating a member of 'the older generation' to which she herself belonged? She never dreamed of such a thing. Our grandmother and my brother and sister and I were all of one congenial batch of humanity; our critical guest was an esteemed and worthy citizen from another batch. Never mind ages. We were our grandmother's friends, secure in our trust that she would see with us eye to eye. If there had been no truth in our visitor's remark, there would have been nothing to laugh at. My brother smiling like 'Fanneh' and taking it all back so 'suddenleh' was quite as hilarious both to me and to my grandmother as was my sister gravely talking down her nose in earnest imitation of our guest.

IV

It is also true that if you want to be vividly remembered down many generations, a quick way to achieve it is to make a sufficiently lilting remark of a personal nature to somebody a great deal younger. Nothing else so sticks in the memory of a child. My own father, for instance, never forgot a remark that was made in his presence when he, aged seven, had been annoying the neighborhood and his mother was giving him a well-deserved beating with her slipper. In the midst of this scene an ancient great-aunt, who had sailed the seas out of New London with her husband in her day, came rolling through the house with nautical mien. She saw her niece with slipper in full action, and gleefully shouted to her in quarter-deck accents, 'Pay on, Adeline! Pay on!'

This happened of a summer's morning in the early eighteen-fifties, but our entire family connection still uses that slogan whenever in our opinion somebody in our tribe is being given a timely dressing-down. 'Pay on, Adeline,' we chorus like sailors singing a chantey. 'Pay on, Adeline, pay on!'

Without the very old to tell us stories, we should lose a great deal from the echoes of an elder day. I once knew a grandmother, not mine this time but a lady from Philadelphia, who told me what her grandmother told her about an experience as a tiny girl in the Revolutionary War. It happened in a lovely house on one of Philadelphia's loveliest streets, and it happened at midnight. The little girl (grandmother to the grandmother I knew) was fast asleep when she was awakened by an unusual tone in the voice of the old night watchman who always went along the street with his bell to announce each hour. Ordinarily it was his habit to sing out, in a perfectly expressionless tone, first the time, then the weather, and third any news of the doubtful state of our armies that might have been brought in.

The watchman's voice was always rhythmic, like a tune, and if you were accustomed to it you did not allow it to interrupt your slumbers except as a sort of drowsy cradle song. But this time he was chanting with a more stirring note in his voice, though still in the usual order of time, weather, and news. This was what he was saying, ringing his bell the while:—

'Twelve o'clock! It's a fine frosty night! Corn-wal-lis sur-rend-ered at York-town!' Over and over down the street.

Then came the thrilling sound of grown men running. The little girl jumped up and peeped out of her window. Candles were being lighted in all the beautiful houses. Bells were ringing. The fathers of her friends were racing to the Square. The town was celebrating with all its heart, for a horseman had just come in with the great news, and nobody dreamed of trying to go to sleep again for the rest of that night.

After reading certain fiction about the American Revolution of late, one might carry away the impression that it was sponsored and approved of chiefly by a runaway rabble. I like to recall my friend's grandmother's eyewitness narra-

tive as a mild antidote. Oral tradition, to be sure; but the fact remains that the street where my friend's grandmother lived in Philadelphia was not inhabited by anybody's 'rabble.'

V

'From generation to generation' is a stately and noble phrase, and down those flights of stairs go bands of angels and devils forevermore. Our great ambition, as we find ourselves nearing the top, can be to send rolling down as few devilish remarks as possible on the heads of those who follow us. This does not mean that we must make our talk too tame. I love to think of a statement that an agile octogenarian made one day to a persistent young agent who was trying to sell him something on the installment plan. 'No, my boy,' said the benignant sage, who calls himself 'The Patriarch.' 'I am not going to buy it, not even to please you. Economy is my motto for *this century*.'

And I like to think also of the time when my husband's mother was having her eightieth birthday, which the family celebrated at our traditional 'Lobster Festival' on Cape Cod. After a great many lobsters had been engulfed, there was a call for speeches, and my husband, the eldest son of the family, was put up as opening speaker. He bowed to his mother and began in the style of a toast — 'To a Lady of Eighty Springs' — when his sister jumped up beside him and amended his statement. 'You mean,' she told him, 'a Lady of Eighty *Inner Springs*!'

And all three generations assembled around the table voted that the last word on the subject had been said.

Just what was it that gave resilience to those eighty inner springs? I believe it was partly those traits we have been discussing: the gift for enhancing the contemporary moment; the gift of independent exploits and projects; the gift of

discrimination; and the gift of recognizing in every generation something that is eternally 'ours.'

Of course it may be objected that these are strong unselfish traits, difficult to foster if one is really very feeble or very ill. That is true in a way, but it is astonishing how a well-rooted trait of personal charm will last and last. The great-grandmother of one of my friends, in her last illness, was visited just in time by the great-granddaughter whom she most intimately loved. Both grandmother and granddaughter were ladies of spicy speech. But the granddaughter was not feeling spicy just now. She leaned over tenderly and said simply, 'How do you feel, Grandma?' speaking softly into the very old lady's ear.

The great-grandmother, who had not spoken for days, recognized the dear voice, braced herself valiantly for the effort, raised one eyelid and looked out knowingly at her great-granddaughter who was also her friend. Then she spoke confidentially, with something of her old astringent manner of crisp rejoinder. 'My cap's on crooked and I feel bad other ways,' said she — and died.

Feminine and fastidious to the last breath, she wished to register in no uncertain terms that a lady can 'feel bad' not only in her circulatory system but also in the dislocation of her cap.

Yes, I think I have been fortunate in my old ladies, and in my old gentlemen as well. I think it is one of the needless afflictions of age to find itself so often depicted as obnoxious in modern literature. Old age need not be obnoxious; that we know. And every fine character who with consummate skill makes life rich, even after its own natural enrichments have departed from this earth, deserves our humble gratitude and our praise. Let us now praise men and women who had lived, deeply lived, to be old. They shall have our proud love from generation to generation, even unto the end of the world.

ADMIRAL OF THE OCEAN SEA

III. The Last Voyage

BY SAMUEL ELIOT MORISON

I

IN his fifty-first year, already an aged man according to the notions of his day, Columbus embarked upon his most dangerous and least profitable voyage. *El Alto Viaje* ('the High Voyage'), as the Admiral himself called it, offers a story of adventure which imagination could hardly invent, and a chronicle of courage, loyalty, and seamanship that cannot fail to interest those who love the sea and honor great navigators.

The main object of this Fourth Voyage was the same as that of the First — to discover a passage to India. Columbus claimed to have discovered Asia in 1492. He still believed that Cuba was the 'Province of Mangi, Empire of Cathay,' — i.e., southeastern China, — and that South America, which he had discovered in 1498, was a new continent that bore much the same relation to China as Australia does. Nobody had been back to Cuba since Columbus had explored its southern coast in 1494, for the very good reason that Cuba contained no gold; and no European had been further west along the Spanish Main than the Gulf of Darien. Everything in the Caribbean west of a line drawn from the further point of Cuba to the Gulf of Darien was still a blank. Somewhere in this yet undiscovered gulf, so Columbus believed, was the long-sought passage to India. Assuming that Cuba was China, there must be a strait to the westward, since Marco Polo had

sailed home that way. And along the shores of that strait gold and precious things innumerable might be found; for the Ophir of the Old Testament should be somewhere in that region.

The Sovereigns agreed to provide Columbus with ships and men, largely to get rid of him. They authorized him to discover and take possession of new lands on the Spanish side of the demarcation line, and to sail home around the world. Nobody in Europe as yet suspected the existence of the Pacific Ocean. And, if nature had been kind enough to provide a strait near the present Panama Canal, instead of in latitude 52° south, Columbus on this voyage might, theoretically, have anticipated Magellan.

The fleet provided by the Sovereigns consisted of four caravels. *La Capitana*, as the flagship was called, measured seventy tons. The Admiral and his young son Ferdinand sailed aboard her. *Santiago de Palos* was a little smaller than *Capitana*. The 'Adelantado,' Bartholomew Columbus, sailed aboard *Santiago* and acted as her virtual captain, without pay, for Francisco de Porras, her titular captain was a political appointee. *La Gallega* measured about sixty tons. Pedro de Terreros, her captain, had sailed on every one of Columbus's voyages. *Vizcatna*, smallest of the fleet, measured fifty tons. She was commanded by Bartolomeo Fieschi, a young

and adventurous member of a Genoese patrician family who had befriended the Colombos before Christopher was born. All told, there were about one hundred and thirty-five men and boys on the payroll. Of these about one quarter never returned.

The ocean crossing began at Masपालomas on the south side of the Grand Canary on the night of May 25, 1502, and on the following day a departure was taken from Ferro. *Oueste, quarta del sudoeste*, 'West and by south,' was the course set by the Admiral. After a quick and uneventful trade-wind passage of twenty-one days, the fastest ocean voyage that Columbus made, the fleet on June 15 reached Martinique. They got under way again on June 18, called at Dominica, ran down the chain of Leeward Islands that Columbus had discovered on his Second Voyage, passed along the south coast of Puerto Rico on the twenty-fourth, and five days later were off the Ozama River, beside the mouth of which lay Santo Domingo, the new capital of Hispaniola.

The Sovereigns had forbidden Columbus to visit his former vicerealty. But the Admiral had very good reasons, besides his natural human curiosity to see how Ovando was getting along, for calling at Santo Domingo. He wished to send letters home by the fleet that was about to depart, and to induce some shipmaster of that fleet to make a trade for *Santiago*. She had proved to be crank and a dull sailer, unsuitable for exploration, although sound enough for a homeward passage in summer. Moreover, he sought refuge from a cyclonic storm that he saw was making up. Well he knew the signs, for he had ridden out a hurricane behind Saona Island in August 1494, and had witnessed a second when ashore on Hispaniola in October 1495: oily swell rolling in from the south-eastward, abnormal tide, an oppressive feeling in the air, low-pressure twinges in his arthritic joints, veiled cirrus clouds tearing along in the upper air while light

gusty winds blew on the surface of the water, gorgeous crimson sunset lighting up the whole sky; and, adds Las Casas, the large number of seals and dolphin-fish on the surface of the ocean. Old salts still believe that strange denizens of the deep come to the surface before a hurricane.

Don Nicolas de Ovando, Knight Commander of Lares and Governor of Hispaniola, had arrived at Santo Domingo in April with a magnificent armada of thirty sail. They were now anchored in the Ozama River, ready to depart on the homeward passage. Columbus, coming to off the harbor mouth but not anchoring, sent Captain Terreros of *Gallega* ashore with a note to the governor, requesting permission to enter, and urging that the homeward-bound fleet be detained in port until the storm had blown over. Ovando treated the request with insolent disdain, read the Admiral's letter aloud to his heelers, who mocked at the Admiral 'as a prophet and soothsayer' in a manner that made honest Terreros long to knock them galley-west. The Governor refused Columbus access to the harbor, and, ignoring the storm warning, sent the homeward-bound fleet to sea forthwith.

Retribution was swift and terrible. This great and gallant fleet had just rounded into the Mona Passage, and had the wedge-shaped eastern end of Hispaniola under their lee, when a furious wind burst upon them from the north-eastward, fairly tearing them apart — for the fleet was strung out along the track of the hurricane. Some ships foundered at sea; others that managed to heave-to in time were driven ashore and pounded to bits. Among those that went down with all hands was the flagship bearing Columbus's enemy Bobadilla, a cargo containing \$600,000 worth of gold, and the greatest gold nugget, worth \$11,000, ever found in the West Indies. Nineteen other ships were lost with all hands, three or four weathered Saona Island and struggled into Santo

Domingo in a sinking condition. Over five hundred lives were lost; and out of this once proud fleet only one ship, the *Aguja*, reached Spain. Because she had been reckoned the meanest, Ovando had assigned her to the Admiral's factor, who was bringing home some \$12,000 in gold that Bobadilla had been forced to disgorge; and this considerable sum safely reached the hands of Don Diego Colón in Spain. No wonder that Columbus's enemies declared he had raised this hurricane by magic art!

The Admiral's squadron escaped unscathed. It is not to be supposed that Columbus, three centuries ahead of his time, knew the law of cyclonic storms; but he knew what to do. Denied access to the harbor, with the wind coming almost due north off the shore, he sailed his fleet a few miles to the westward and anchored close under the land, where he had protection from the north and west—the men growling and grumbling, says Ferdinand, because they had been denied shore leave at the city. The fleet rode easily the next day, as the force of wind increased; but when night fell on June 30, and the storm devils began to shriek their loudest, only *Capitana's* ground tackle held. Each of the other ships was torn loose from her anchorage by the fearful gusts that came off the hills of Hispaniola, and driven out into a wild and foaming sea. Through black night and howling hurricane each caravel fought gamely for her life, believing that the others were lost; while the Admiral, after causing every bit of ironmongery aboard to be frapped to *Capitana's* cables, passed the night alternately cursing Ovando and praying to God. 'What man ever born,' he wrote, 'not excepting Job, who would not have died of despair when, in such weather, seeking safety for my son, brother, shipmates and myself, we were forbidden the land and the harbors that I, by God's will and sweating blood, had won for Spain?'

Yet, by God's will and good seaman-

ship, the fleet came through safely. Crank *Santiago*, the one Columbus had tried to get rid of by exchange, was almost snatched from him, since Captain Porras, the political appointee, was useless in anything but fair weather. Fortunately the Adelantado, whom his nephew calls the best seaman in the fleet, took charge, boldly sought sea room, and managed to save her whole. *Gallega* lost her boat, which was in the water when she slipped out to sea; it swamped and the painter had to be cut, but Captain Terreros saw his vessel through. *Vizcaina* seems to have made out all right, under her Genoese Captain Fieschi.

It had been agreed before the storm struck home that in case they were separated a rendezvous would be made in an excellent little landlocked harbor that Columbus knew, Puerto Escondido (now Puerto Viejo de Azua) at the head of Ocoa Bay. On Sunday, July 3, each member of this battered fleet of four in succession crawled into Azua and came safely to anchor. The captains could not have done better if each had carried a meteorologist and a Bowditch.

From Azua the fleet rounded Beata Island and the Alta Vela rock, and put in at the roadstead of Jacmel to avoid another impending storm. That threat passed, they set sail on July 14 into the yet unknown western half of the Caribbean. On July 31 they sighted a fine high island ahead. This was Bonacca, one of the Bay Islands off the coast of Honduras.

II

Bonacca is a handsome island about eight miles long and rising to twelve hundred feet, surrounded by a line of coral reefs through which it is easy to pick out channels into protected waters. Bartholomew went ashore with two boats, met a crowd of Indians, and showed them pearls and grains of gold; but the natives were so ignorant of these

precious things that they offered to buy instead of producing more for sale.

It was early August when Columbus stood in toward the mainland, visible from Bonacca and about thirty miles distant. The fleet made terra firma at Cape Honduras, which Columbus named Punta Caxinas, from the Arawak name of a tree that they found there.

Now began a long beat to windward. On Sunday, August 14, the caravels anchored off the mouth of a river which Columbus named Rio de la Posesión, because he there took formal possession of the mainland for his Sovereigns, and Fray Alexander celebrated Mass. The country, wrote Ferdinand, was 'verdant and beautiful, although low, and there were many pines, oaks, seven kinds of palms. . . . They have an abundance of pumas, deer, and gazelles.' These last were the small red deer which are much hunted on that coast today.

Hundreds of Indians came down to view the taking possession, and a lively trade followed with hawks' bells, beads, and the usual truck. The Indians brought 'fowls of the country, which are better than ours, roasted fish, red and white beans,' and other commodities like those of Hispaniola. They were darker in color and more low-browed than the Arawaks, mostly naked, their bodies tattooed or painted with designs like lions, deer, and turreted castles, 'and their faces painted red and black to appear beautiful, but really they look like devils.' Their ears were bored with holes large enough to insert a hen's egg; Columbus therefore named the region *La Costa de las Orejas*, 'the Coast of the Ears.' These were either the Paya or the Jicaque Indians, flesh-eating emigrants from a forested portion of South America.

Along the Miskito Coast of Honduras from the Rio Romano to Cape Gracias á Dios, the fleet bucked head winds and foul weather continuously for twenty-eight days, beating offshore by day and anchoring close to the land every night. 'It was one continual rain, thunder, and

lightning,' wrote Columbus. 'The ships lay exposed to the weather, with sails torn, and anchors, rigging, cables, boats, and many of the stores lost; the people exhausted and so down in the mouth that they were all the time making vows to be good, to go on pilgrimages and all that; yea, even hearing one another's confessions! Other tempests I have seen, but none that lasted so long or so grim as this. Many old hands whom we looked on as stout fellows lost their courage. What griped me most were the sufferings of my son; to think that so young a lad, only thirteen, should go through so much. But Our Lord lent him such courage that he even heartened the rest, and he worked as though he had been to sea all of a long life. That comforted me. I was sick and many times lay at death's door, but gave orders from a dog-house that the people clapped together for me on the poop deck. My brother was in the worst of the ships, the crank one, and I felt terribly, having persuaded him to come against his will.'

It was indeed a disheartening experience, much worse than being in deep water, where you can lay-to in such weather. Every morning at daylight the wind makes up from the eastward. Wolf a cold breakfast, heave up the anchor, hoist the yards on which the smallest sails in the locker are bent, claw offshore on the starboard tack in a smother of shoal-water waves that roll you down to leeward, under a rain so heavy that one ship cannot see the rest, and at times so torrential that each scupper is a waterfall and all distinction between sea and sky seems lost. Around noon the Admiral chooses an open spell and signals the fleet to wear. Around they come, dancing down-wind for a few brief moments, then hauled up sharp on the port tack and slogging in toward shore. No rest for anyone; watch below has to keep bailing, thirty fathom of sodden cable must be flaked in readiness for anchoring. More rain and thunder-squalls, water shoaling, low coastline

coming up at you, heave the lead, Admiral signals 'Come to an anchor,' hard down helm (four hands on tiller), let go the hook, and strike all sail but the mizzen. Anchor drags, pay out more scope, stand by to make sail if need be; finally she bites, and the caravel rides in comparative safety. At this point some forecastle pessimist casts an eye ashore and growls out, 'There's that same blasted tree we left this morning!' Everything is soaked, can't get the fire going on the hearth, so you grab a wormy biscuit and a hunk of salt horse and roll up anywhere in your wet clothes while the caravel pitches and splashes and groans and creaks and rattles, and then the wind moderates and the mosquitoes fly out from the mangroves to gorge themselves on the blood of Spaniards too tired to brush them off.

During the twenty-eight days that this kept up, the fleet made good only 165 to 170 miles. It is another example of Columbus's fortitude that he refused to declare himself beaten, change his plan, and slide down-wind to the land of gold and silver that he had heard about. What seaman, struggling in the teeth of wind and sea, tossed on a groaning and straining vessel, showered with spray, soaked by torrential rains, half drowned in breaking seas, exhausted by hauling on lines and working pumps, has not dreamed of that voluptuous pleasure that no landsman ever knows, changing from a foul to a fair wind? A simple order — 'Stand by braces! Up with the helm! Easy now!' — and Columbus's fleet would have passed from hell to heaven inside two minutes, the tempest would have seemed a fair brisk gale, and the ships would have sailed fast and gayly before the wind without fuss or strain. But the Admiral of the Ocean Sea must seek the strait. That's what he came for. He could not afford to keep the sea at night, since that part of the Caribbean was still unexplored, might have been full of reefs and islands; and laying-to at night in the westerly current would

have lost too much distance. Besides, the Admiral feared missing something; he was hoping and praying that God would soon spend His wrath; that some afternoon as the fleet approached this coast the sky would clear, the wind change; and, as the Red Sea parted for Moses, so here these sodden shores would seem to fly apart, the strait open up ahead, and the fleet go roaring through to the Indian Ocean, the Spice Islands, and everlasting glory.

Strait there was none to reward all this effort and anguish. But, as seamen say, foul weather must end, luck must change; and so on September 14 the fleet found the coast trending southerly and rounded a cape beyond which the land actually fell away slightly to the westward; now the good Lord gave them favorable winds and currents. So the Admiral named this cape *Gracias á Dios*. Seamen who frequent that coast have asked me why so low and ill-favored a headland should bear so gracious a name. The Admiral's story is sufficient explanation; it was 'Thanks be to God!' for a southward-trending coastline, and a chance to sail off the wind.

Having rounded Cape Gracias á Dios, the fleet coasted southward along the eastern shore of the present Republic of Nicaragua. On September 25 they reached a region which the Indians called *Cariai*, and spent ten days anchored behind a pretty wooded island which the Indians called *Quiriviri*, and the Admiral named *La Huerta*, 'The Garden.' This island was probably Uva, and the place the modern Puerto Limón, Costa Rica.

Here the Admiral decided to spend some time in order to give the men a good rest; and the indications are that they enjoyed themselves thoroughly. A great concourse of Talamanca Indians gathered on the shore, some armed with bows and arrows, others with palm-tree spears tipped with fishbones, and others with clubs. The men wore their hair braided and wound about their heads,

and both they and the women had 'eagles' of 'guanin' pendent around their necks, 'as we wear an *Agnus Dei* or other reliquary.' The Admiral kept his people aboard, fearing trouble; but the Indians were so eager to trade that they swam out to the ships carrying a line of cotton jumpers and guanin ornaments. Columbus, however, soon sized up the local business situation — that the Indians had no pure gold, only this guanin, an alloy of gold and copper. Consequently he refused to trade or to accept presents, but sent the visitors ashore laden with gifts. This appears to have offended them, as they left the truck tied together at the boat landing. The Indians then tried an ancient method of persuading visitors to trade. They sent aboard the flagship two girls, one about eight and the other about fourteen years old, not knowing how tender the Spaniards liked their maidens. 'The damsels,' says Ferdinand, 'showed great courage; for, although the Christians were complete strangers to them, they exhibited neither grief nor sorrow, but always looked pleasant and modest; hence they were well treated by the Admiral, who caused them to be clothed and fed, and sent them ashore, where the old man who had delivered them received them back with much satisfaction.' Although the presence of the Admiral's fourteen-year-old son, rather than respect for maidenly modesty, explains this abnormal continence of the mariners, it astonished the natives, and caused them to endow their visitors with supernatural attributes.

On the following day the Adelantado went ashore, attended by a secretary, in order to record what information he could obtain about Cariai. When he began to question two leading men who approached him as official greeters, and the scribe produced paper, pen, and inkhorn to note the answers, this writing apparatus struck the natives as a form of sorcery; they fled in terror, tossing a powdered herb in the air to dispel the

magic of these gods for whom fresh young virgins offered no temptation.

On Wednesday, October 5, the fleet left Cariai and sailed alongshore in a southeasterly direction. Towards evening, when a little over fifty miles from the last anchorage, they found a channel opening into a great bay. The strait at last! But it was only another disappointment — the Boca del Dragón that leads into a great island-studded bay, now named Almirante. On the eastern side of this channel was an island now called Colón, but known to his two Indian guides as Carambaru.

Every explorer of the Atlantic coast of America from Davis Straits to the River Plate, and over a period of at least two centuries, was misled by the spacious gestures of Indians when pointing out the way. By spreading their arms and then touching their fingers, the Indians meant to convey the idea of a bay, lake, or widening of the river; but the sanguine European understood them to mean the Indian Ocean, the Great South Sea, or some ocean gateway thereto. On this occasion the Indians waved Columbus on to another great bay, Chiriqui Lagoon, which he understood to be the ocean. It was a strait, all right; the caravels sailed 'as it were in streets between one island and another, the foliage of the trees brushing the cordage of the vessels.'

On January 14, 1940, we explored the passages in and between these two bays in a motor launch, seeking for one that would meet Ferdinand's description; and in Split Hill Channel we found the strait. Here there is a narrow and tortuous passage between high banks lined with lofty trees; and the channel passes so close to one shore that we could well imagine the rigging of the four caravels being brushed by branches. Today there is only seven feet of water in Split Hill Channel; but an aged pilot informed us that before the earthquake of 1912, which heaved up the bottom, he had taken vessels drawing fourteen feet

through there; and *Capitana, Santiago, Gallega*, and *Vizcaína* needed much less water than that. All the same, it required nerve and fine seamanship to steer four square-rigged ships through so narrow a passage, with no pilot available for anything bigger than a dugout canoe. Columbus was taking big chances because of the great prize, should this prove to be the passage to India. He hoped in a few days to encounter Vasco da Gama's fleet, beating against the trade wind or anchored in one of the Spice Islands, and to claim everything for the Sovereigns of Castile.

Again a disappointment. As the caravels issued from this narrow defile they entered a spacious landlocked bay some thirty miles long and fifteen across. *Alburema*, as Columbus named it, Chiriqui Lagoon as we call it today, is a beautiful sheet of peacock-hued water, an inland salt lake cupped within a verdure-clad cordillera that rises 11,000 feet above sea level. Compensations there were for the Admiral. On October 7 a landing was made on the coast, a brisk barter began in gold disks, 'eagles,' and provisions, 'and from here he began to go trading along the coast.' 'The people were all painted on face and body in divers colors, white, black, and red,' remembered Ferdinand, 'only covering their genitals with a narrow clout of cotton.'

For ten days (October 6-16) the fleet idled about Chiriqui Lagoon, fishing, and visiting Indian villages to swap trading truck for gold and provisions. Much information was acquired through the interpreters from Cariari, who appear to have learned Castilian with surprising rapidity. They certainly performed the native interpreter's function of telling white men exactly what they wished to hear, which in this instance included a certain amount of truth. From them Columbus for the first time definitely learned that he was on an isthmus between two seas, and that an Indian province called *Ciguare* lay on the ocean nine days' march across the cordillera;

he inferred that this was the Ciamba (Cochin-China) of Marco Polo. The Ciguareans had an immense quantity of gold and wore coral ornaments as well; and Columbus had read somewhere that in Ciamba coral bits were used as money. Obviously he was coasting along the Golden Chersonese, the Malay Peninsula, where Solomon sent Hiram for fine gold; he was near the centre of the earth's greatest store of precious metal.

III

Ten days the fleet spent exploring this beautiful Chiriqui Lagoon, bartering for gold, and collecting tall tales of Ciguare. On October 17, choosing a day of westerly wind, the fleet passed out to sea by Tiger Channel. Turning southward toward the main, they anchored off the mouth of a river called Guaiga. Here began the region that the natives called Veragua — an important source of gold, so they informed the Spaniards, and in this they told the truth.

The fleet appears to have stayed several days at Guaiga in the hope of making contact with the natives; for the Indian villages of Veragua were situated in rivers some distance back from the coast. On October 20 the Spaniards had their wish, and found these Indians to be far more bellicose than any yet encountered on this voyage. Ferdinand tells how the boats going ashore found over a hundred Indians on the beach, who assaulted them furiously, running into the water up to their middles, brandishing spears, blowing horns, beating a drum, splashing water toward the Christians, and squirting from their mouths some nasty herb that they were chewing. The Spaniards tried to appease them, and with some success, since they managed to draw near enough to exchange sixteen 'mirrors' of pure gold worth 150 ducats for two or three hawks' bells apiece.

Columbus's only interest in this coast was to locate the source of the golden ornaments worn by the Indians. Some-

where in that region, the interpreters informed him, were the mines whence came all this wealth. The fleet had probably reached a point somewhere near the mouth of the Rio Coclé, where the Indians from Cariacai said that the 'trading country' ended. Columbus therefore proposed to return to the centre of auriferous activity near Veragua, and investigate further.

Two months elapsed before he could do so. The rainy season had set in, and an unusually boisterous one it was, with gusty northers and strong westerlies. 'There arose so violent a storm that we were forced to go wherever it drove us,' wrote the Admiral. 'I ran before the wind wherever it took me, without power to resist.' On drove the fleet past the entrance to the future Panama Canal, and providentially into a fine harbor that opened up just where he wanted it. The Admiral named this harbor *Puerto Bello*, 'because it is quite large, fair, inhabited, and encompassed by a well-tilled country.' The fleet entered it on November 2, 'passing between two islands; within the harbor, vessels may lie close to shore, and beat out if they will. The country about this harbor is not very rough, but cultivated and full of houses only a stone's throw or crossbow shot apart, pretty as a picture, the fairest thing you ever saw. During the seven days that we tarried there on account of the rain and foul weather, canoes came continually from the country round about to barter all sorts of eatables and skeins of well-spun cotton, which they gave for trifles of brass such as lace-points and tags.'

This description of Porto Bello still holds good, except that the jungle has grown up over the once well-tilled fields of the Cuna Cuna Indians. The harbor is so spacious, well-protected, and easily entered that the Spaniards later selected it as the Caribbean terminus of a mule track crossing the Isthmus of Panama. During the annual six weeks' fair, when the galleons from Spain exchanged their

cargoes for the treasure from Peru and the products of Darien, Porto Bello became the most thriving town in the Americas. Thomas Gage, who came there in 1637, reported seeing a train of two hundred mules come in laden with silver ingots, which were piled up in the market place like cordwood. In the eighteenth century, when the fairs ended, the town dwindled away almost to nothing; but the remains of several forts that once protected it, and the vast ruined customhouse, testify to the former grandeur of Columbus's Puerto Bello.

On November 9 the fleet left this pleasant place, sailed around Manzanillo Point, and made fifteen or twenty more miles easting; but on the tenth the wind came easterly again and forced them back thirteen miles, 'and they put in among islets next the continent where Nombre de Dios now is: and because all these coasts and islets were full of maize, they called it *Puerto de Bastimentos*, Harbor of Provisions.' There the fleet remained twelve days, repairing both the ships and the casks. Ferdinand reports an amusing incident of their stay. One of the ship's boats, seeing an Indian canoe full of paddlers, decided to speak it; but the Indians, when they approached, jumped overboard and dived like waterfowl. Whenever an Indian came to the surface the boat tried to row him down, but he always dived and came up a bowshot or two distant in another direction. For hours the boat continued this futile chase, while the men aboard the ships roared with laughter at the rage of the hounds and the skill of the hares.

On November 23 they left Nombre de Dios. After making fifteen leagues 'with great exertions' to the eastward, the wind and current drove them back. 'But in again making for the port which I had quitted, I found on the way another port, which I named *Retrete*, where I put in for shelter with great peril and regret, and very weary, both I, the ships,

and my people.' It was now November 26, 1502. The fleet lay-to outside while the boats sounded the entrance and the harbor. This boat's crew brought back an over-favorable report of the place, because they were tired of being tossed about, wished to trade with the Indians, and found steep-to banks inside against which the ships would have to lie, as the harbor was so small; 'it could not contain five or six ships together.' The entrance was only seventy-five to one hundred feet wide with rocks 'as sharp as diamonds' sticking up on either side; but the channel was so deep that if you favored either side when entering you could jump ashore on the rocks. This tiny retired harbor was probably Puerto Escribanos, about twenty miles east of Nombre de Dios. Visible from seaward, the opening was a natural place for Columbus to send boats in the hope of finding shelter.

Retrete is the first place on this voyage where Ferdinand mentions alligators. 'In the harbor were vast great lizards or crocodiles, which go out to sleep ashore and scatter a certain odor as if all the musk in the world were collected; but they are so ravenous and cruel that if they find a man asleep ashore they will drag him into the water to devour him, though they are cowardly and flee when attacked. These lizards are found in many other parts of the mainland, and some do declare that they are crocodiles like those of the Nile.'

Crocodiles — Nile — Terrestrial Paradise! So Columbus would have argued on his Third Voyage. But he was older now, and disillusioned. This Otro Mundo was no paradise, but a rough, wild shore where honest traders would find it hard to gain a living. If only a gap would appear in that eternal cordillera, and let him through to the Indian Ocean! He was so tired of beating along this rugged coast, had begun to believe there was no strait; you might dig one, perhaps, by enslaving the Indians, or build a road across the isthmus for pack mules —

why not? Men travel daily from Genoa to Venice. But that would cost a mint of money, and Columbus very well knew the frown he would get from the Queen and the cutting, ungracious words from the King if he came home with no gold to speak of, only a plan for spending it. So the best course was to seek more gold; gold and pearls were the only things that talked in Castile. So farewell Strait, back to Veragua and exploit the mines.

'On Monday, December 5, the Admiral, perceiving that the violence of the east and northeast winds abated not, and that no business could be done with these people, decided to turn back and verify what the Indians had said about the mines of Veragua, and therefore that day he went to sleep at Puerto Bello 10 leagues to westward.' The next day, December 6, the fleet had proceeded on its course but a few miles when the wind whipped around into the west again; and for a month the caravels were battered back and forth between Puerto Bello and the Chagres River. The currents along this coast always run with the wind, as Ferdinand noted, and this was a winter wind; beating against it got you nowhere.

Columbus writes of this dreadful month briefly but eloquently: 'The tempest arose and wearied me so that I knew not where to turn; my old wound opened up, and for nine days I was as lost without hope of life; eyes never beheld the sea so high, angry, and covered with foam. The wind not only prevented our progress, but rendered it dangerous to run into any headland for shelter, hence we were forced to keep out in this bloody ocean, seething like a pot on a hot fire. Never did the sky look more terrible; for one whole day and night it lightened continually, so that I was constantly watching in the flashes, and each time marveled that the spars and sails were not lifted off me; the flashes came with such fury and frightfulness that all thought the ships would be blasted. All

this time the water never ceased to fall from the sky; I don't say it rained, because it was like another deluge. The people were so worn out that they longed for death to end their so great sufferings.'

Ferdinand tells us of the frightful thunder and lightning, the torrential rain sluicing down, the men wet through for days on end, never getting half an hour's rest, 'struggling with all the elements, and dreading them all; for in such terrible storms they dread the fire in lightning flashes, the air for its fury, the water for the waves, and the earth for the reefs and rocks of that unknown coast which sometimes come up at a man near the haven where he would be and, not knowing the entrance, he chooses rather to contend with the other elements. . . . Besides these so divers terrors there occurred one no less dangerous and wonderful, a waterspout which on Tuesday, December 13, passed by the ships, the which had they not dissolved by reciting the Gospel according to St. John, it would have swamped whatever it struck without a doubt; for it draws the water up to the clouds in a column thicker than a water-butt, twisting it about like a whirlwind.' The Admiral exorcised the waterspout. From his Bible he read an account of that famous tempest off Capernaum, concluding, 'Fear not, it is I!' Then, clasping the Bible in his left hand, with drawn sword he traced a cross in the sky and a circle around his whole fleet.

That same night *Vizcaina* lost sight of the other three, but had the good fortune to encounter them again after three very dark and dreadful days, during which she lost her boat and once anchored, but had to cut the cable. There followed two days of calm, which for the superstitious were almost as horrible as the tempest; for the caravels were surrounded by great schools of sharks. The men took and killed them by hook and chain, until they wearied of the bloody sport; and though some regarded shark

meat as of evil omen, all were so ravenous and their stores so spent that fresh shark steak was a welcome feast. By this time, says Ferdinand, 'what with the heat and dampness, our ship biscuit had become so wormy that, God help me, I saw many who waited for darkness to eat the porridge made of it, that they might not see the maggots; and others were so used to eating them that they didn't even trouble to pick them out, because they might lose their supper had they been so nice.'

Finally the fleet put in at a port called by the Indians Huiva. 'And here we stayed from the second day of the feast of the Nativity (December 26) to the third day of January, 1503.' This must have been either Limón Bay, now the harbor of the Canal Zone port of Cristóbal, or the adjacent Manzanilla Bay, which makes a harbor for the Panamanian city of Colón. So Columbus's fleet kept Christmas 1502 and New Year 1503 riding at anchor off the site of our Coco Solo naval base, or within sight of the Panama Canal entrance at Cristóbal, while *Gallega* was hove-down on a near-by beach, her bottom being graved and her seams payed with pitch.

It is sad to consider what Columbus missed. Had he now been so keen about the strait as he was for gold, had he questioned the Indians closely here as he had in Chiriqui, he might have sent his boats five miles around Toro Point and up the Chagres, and proceeded by dugout canoe to a point only ten or twelve miles distant from the Pacific tides. One can well understand why he did not. There are times when, after a terrible buffeting at sea, a seaman can only lie in port like a dog licking his wounds after a bear fight. Columbus was so exhausted and humbled that he had no energy for exploration, and his officers and men were only too glad to relax. So it was left for Vasco Núñez de Balboa to gaze with 'wild surmise' on the Pacific, from a height in Darien.

THE CONTRIBUTORS' CLUB

PATERNITY

THE father begins as a king, has music in him
to charm the sullenest night. His thoughts
are large

as his gained provinces. His enemies
can move against, not conquer his delight.
Small mutinies he watches like a game,
walks in his garden, plans alliances,
tastes the full savor of accomplished things
in works only begun under his reign.
But should he harp upon his kingship, soon
he learns with pain he can no longer captain
his powers, his hopes. And then he leaves off
smiling.

At last the father has no music in him,
but is rough tangled strings that, touched,
enlarge

the discord in his heart. For the hour comes
when all the notes are strangled, when he
looks

with blind eyes at a closing door, to see
what he loved so confounded and undone,
hanged by its own hair on the treacherous
tree,

and cries, all wordless: 'Oh, my son, my son!'

BABETTE DEUTSCH

LOVE IN COAL ALLEY

LOVE in Coal Alley wakes to fear the light —
He fumbles in the pre-dawn for his clothes,
She packs his food and hides the fear that
goes

Daily where he goes, to the daily night.

The widowing edge of fear, the rain of soot,
Kiss at the door — their lips already tasting
The smudge of days across their bodies'
wasting —

He tramps the black snow heavily underfoot.

She dreams a little of Sunday and a lawn,
But most of what she sees outdoors is fear,
Shaped like stretcher bearers and coming
near.

He stops his wish, and, from the edge of
dawn,

Waves a last time hastily and turns
Back into night until the night returns.

JOHN CIARDI

THE COLLECTED WORKS OF MRS. PETER WILLOUGHBY

WHEN new people said to Mrs. Peter Willoughby of Sutton Place South, 'Mrs. Willoughby, you are a writer, aren't you?' she always colored faintly with pleasure and said, 'Well — yes,' because she did have several works in progress.

Ever since she had attained a degree of success with her first short story in a private school at Holton-on-Hudson, Mrs. Willoughby, then Janet Tucker, had assumed that she would write. She saw with her mind's eye her novels ranged on a shelf, a string of titles 'By Janet Willoughby.' One of them was *Tamotua*. She had got the idea while coming across 57th Street with her husband one night, seeing the neon sign of the Automat reflected backwards in the plate-glass window of Steinway's. This was to be a really good novel about New York — quite unusual — because, as one of Mrs. Willoughby's male friends once said (probably quoting), 'There are very few good novels about New York. A novel has to have bushes in it.'

Another of Mrs. Willoughby's books was a regional novel, full of poverty and chicken feed. She had written the first four pages.

On some days Mrs. Willoughby saw her collected writing as a rather compact body of work, stylistically superb, but small; but on most days the line of books was about three fourths the length of the Balzac shelf in the Willoughby library.

As the years since private school had come on, bringing marriage to James Peter Willoughby and, in time, three charming children, she always compared herself, in her mind, with writers who started at her age — and now she was forty.

All her feminine friends, who were young-looking and chic, felt, at least in some vague way, that they too were creative. They upheld her hands in the belief that she was going to write some day. When an author came to their cocktail parties, they steered him promptly over to Janie — because 'Janie writes.' Sometimes, at their parties, you would see Janie sitting reflectively a little

apart, with her fine chin uplifted, and her friends would murmur that Janie's mind was stirring with a plot — 'she's a writer, you know.'

Jim Willoughby was very patient and encouraging about the literary projects that had bothered the pretty fair head of his wife for twenty years. He would come home from his office and stand in the softly carpeted taupe living room overlooking the East River and jangle the cocktail shaker, and say to Mrs. Willoughby, 'How's it coming, dear?'

'*Mot à mot*,' she would reply evasively.

Then Jim would turn to whoever else was there and say that Janie was writing something but didn't want to show it to anyone yet (which certainly was true, inasmuch as the first draft wasn't really written).

Jim had got her a separate room in which she could write her works, a typewriter, and various source materials. For several years now she had given her mornings over to writing. She would go resolutely to the room set aside for her in the apartment and warm up by reading the work of another author. After that she would dip briefly into some writer's memoirs, which she always found quite helpful, or glance into the backs of books to see how many pages long they were. Then she would examine her notes or add to them. Soon it was time for lunch. At that time, and in the afternoon, it was necessary to see her friends, in order not to develop the habit of living in an ivory tower.

Because she admired literature so much and was such a wide reader, Mrs. Willoughby used quotations aptly. Never too many — just two or three in the course of an evening, and never the same one twice at dinner parties.

Once the conversation had been about the casual male habit of kissing other men's wives when greeting them, and Mrs. Willoughby, in pastel chiffon, had quoted at the perfect moment, '*La femme qui donne sa bouche donne tout*.'

She also could quote aptly from Rimbaud and from all three Sitwells. The only old saw she liked was '*Nulla dies sine linea*.'

She thought of herself as an extremely gifted but normal woman, which made her talent all the rarer and the more valuable. And if she wasn't writing just now — well, these were her years for living.

It also had occurred to Mrs. Willoughby that her literary output was spare because

she was such a perfectionist. In this slipshod age it was so important to be a perfectionist — to have really well-chosen clothes and interesting food, and play games well, and rear one's children to be discriminating, and have a house that was a proper background, and intelligent dinner parties.

All this took thought, and it also took time to guard one's figure by careful exercise and see that one didn't really fall to pieces.

In the autumn of 1941, Mrs. Willoughby decided that she would achieve more if she arose earlier. A writer should be at his desk by 8.30 A. M., after a brisk walk. Mrs. Willoughby did this for two mornings. No one else was out so early except a Filipino boy with two dachshunds. The second morning, walking in the fine, heady air, she acknowledged a small fear that had been lingering at the back of her mind for some years. It would have been better to have produced quietly, and then, when her friends marveled, take the casual attitude that it was a little thing she had tossed off between benefits.

She was glad that she was going to meet someone of the craft — Lolly's cousin Frank — that afternoon at Lolly's party. She would talk over with him the impasse her characters had reached in *Tamotua*.

Mrs. Willoughby, in a pencil-slim gray crepe suit and a little gold-colored hat, arrived late at the party, looking fresh, despite several hours of morning work rereading her notes for *Tamotua* and a hundred pages of F. Scott Fitzgerald.

Lolly's town apartment, which had scarcely any furniture in it, — just carpets, white chrysanthemums, and Léger paintings, — was full of people. Jim had already arrived, and so had Frank Winters, author of four books and a flop on Broadway.

'Janie darling!' exclaimed Lolly. 'Absolutely the prettiest author!' Then, lowering her voice, she said, 'I'm simply furious with Frank. I ask you, doesn't he look dreadful? Why doesn't he comb his hair? And he came carrying a moth-eaten brief case!'

Mrs. Willoughby looked. She saw Frank Winters peering nearsightedly at the people, and getting quietly plastered. His hair sprouted strangely from his head.

Frank ambled up to Lolly and said, 'I'd like to meet the Mrs. Willoughby who is always going to write, and tell her, "Janie, old girl, old girl, why not face facts, and drop the idea?"'

Lolly, in a flowing chartreuse gown, stood frozen.

'I am Mrs. Willoughby, Mr. Winters,' said Mrs. Willoughby gently. 'Why do you think I should give it up?'

"The first requisite of statesmanship is to face the facts," he quoted. 'The facts are that a beautiful woman such as I see you to be, my dear, has only two duties towards the arts: one, to stay beautiful; two, to stay where people can see her. Do not isolate yourself and write.'

'But suppose I have something to say —' said Mrs. Willoughby.

'Then say it, my dear lady. Don't write it. There's too much writing going on today — articles, reports, analyses, cycles of novels, for the most part very dreary — and too little conversational give-and-take among human beings — the kind of give-and-take that I am sure there is in your presence, Mrs. Willoughby.'

Depleted by this speech, he retreated triumphantly, having solved the problem. He turned to several men near by and inquired, 'Isn't that right?' There was a cheerful echo, 'Damn right.'

All Mrs. Willoughby's closest friends had heard the complimentary part, and Jim had heard. He smiled at her.

It was the first time the idea had been presented to Mrs. Willoughby that she didn't have to write, ever. She could tell her friends with perfect equanimity that she had given up her writing for other fields.

A great feeling of relief swept her soul. She would have so much free time. She could learn Portuguese. She could go to that new samba class.

Mr. Winters was right. There was such a fearful lot of writing nowadays. Everybody and his dog were writing.

And that was such a nice quotation he had used. She could almost hear herself saying it at one of her dinner parties, perhaps to one of Jim's friends who had come up from Washington. She would lean forward, exquisite in her pearl-gray chiffon, and say thoughtfully, "The first requisite of statesmanship is to face the facts."

As they went down in a taxi to Sutton Place, Mrs. Willoughby nestled against Jim's shoulder and said thoughtfully, 'You don't mind, do you, darling, if I don't finish the book?'

'Which book, dear?' said Peter Willoughby. 'Any of them.'

'No,' said Peter Willoughby. 'Certainly not.'

MARY ELIZABETH PLUMMER

STONE BRIDGE

THERE is where the water runs
Close to iris heart, and many metal suns
Lie on the willow's throat.
The gray stone arches low,
Water and trout may go,
Glistening, deep and afloat.
Fingering grass apart,
The stream curves and is gone,
The towers of night are blue,
And here men lonely and shy
Come down and lean on the stone and brood,
Watching stars in the sky,
Hearing the liquid sigh
Of water under stone.

Awkward and lonely they lean
With laughter still and withdrawn.
The cigarettes smoulder and gleam,
O, after the age of brawn,
And the steel we thought would preserve
Justice and powers we serve,
After we see that love
Would have gained us what killing would not,
Men will still linger and lean
Under stars where the marshes are deep,
And let water flow under stone;
Their speech will have kindness unsaid,
And the calmness of earth at sleep,
The wisdom we've always known,
Yet could never keep.

GEORGE ABBE

GRANDMOTHER

So strange a thing is this we call remembrance,
Each time I gather clothes on ironing day,
All clean and stiff and sweet with starch and sun,
I grieve you may not dampen them, your way.

So strange a thing is this we call remembrance,
I am not startled, smelling sun-stiff clothes,
To see your silver spectacles and hear
You say to me, 'Thee let me sprinkle those!'

WALDEEN H. WHITE

CAROLINE E. CHURCH

Atlantic Associate

I SHOULD like to speak to you for a little about Miss Caroline Church. She was the most anonymous member of our editorial staff but her right-mindedness and integrity were discernible in the *Atlantic* for over twenty years. I must call her 'Churchie' for so she has long stood in my mind and always shall. It was fun to work with her. Her quick, firm step coming up the hall meant business, meant determination, meant zest. Eight Arlington Street means something to every one of us, but to no one did it mean more than to Churchie. For eighteen years I worked in harness with her, and for a part of that time our desks were in the same room; never once did I see her disheartened or disgruntled. She had the most exacting task of us all: she had to prepare the copy (and when the copy was late she did this on the run); she had to police the magazine for errors of fact and errors of taste; she had to polish our prose and be ready to defend it against exacting readers who thought that they knew more about the standard dictionaries and the *Atlantic* usage than she did. I used to pass on some of the querulous complaints to her and it made me grin to see her explanations come flying back, like hot shot, so firm and to the mark. Churchie stood by her guns. Work out of hours was no chore; her last week end she took copy home to prepare for the Monday pouch. I dropped into her office Saturday noon with the manuscript in my hands and, finding her desk deserted but her hat still there, I was about to prop the pages on its crown when in she came, smiling. I like to think that the magazine was almost the biggest thing in her life. I know she gave it life, I know she gave it the most impeccable proofreading of any periodical in America.

The *Atlantic* was more than business to Churchie. To work with her was to be her friend. She would help you with your problems but never trouble you with her own. Although she did her reading tucked away by herself, without fuss or talk, when she came out to lunch or to a meeting, she had the cheer and confidence you needed. I know how often I have borrowed from her buoyancy. On the return from my lecture trips I'd hear her coming up the hall to discuss the schedule, and her 'Hello, Boss, glad to have you back!' was a great lift. She led the singing at our parties, she kept in touch with those who were forced to withdraw; had there been an air raid, she would have kept us in order. She was the eager incarnation of how to do the right job the right way. And with that unquenchable spirit there went a singular capacity for encouragement. She was a person for whom you tried to do your best work. She brought out the best in us as she brought out the best in the *Atlantic*.

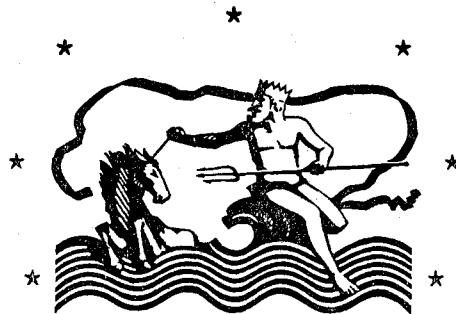
We have lost something precious, solid, and hard to replace. I think of the spirit and quality which Churchie never hesitated to burn up for the *Atlantic*, and realize that people like her have kept the magazine alight stretching back eighty-five years. She'd have helped to keep our heads up in a year like the one ahead. She'd be proud of us, and we of her. Remember her. — E. W.

THE NEW ATLANTIC SERIAL

THE Children

BY NINA FEDOROVA

AUTHOR OF THE \$10,000 PRIZE NOVEL, THE FAMILY



CHAPTERS I - VI

THE CHILDREN

BY NINA FEDOROVA

I

HAVE you any children?’
‘Six.’

‘Six?’

The lady behind the counter looked up. Hostility was in her eyes. She said nothing to the customer standing on the other side of the counter, but addressed another lady, at her right hand, in a voice intentionally insulting and loud:—

‘Mrs. Brown, did you hear that? *Six* children. Egoism or imbecility? How can we help people if they are like that, with *six* children?’

She knew she should not speak like that to the alien woman’s face. But the habit of being secure misleads people occasionally. So the lady said once more with disdain:—

‘Six! We should give the refugees some good reading on birth control. . . .’

Suddenly she met the customer’s eyes. Hatred looked out of them, the more poignant and striking since it was looking out of a gentle and weary feminine face.

‘How do my children concern *you*?’ the woman asked, and her breath grew short and audible.

‘*How?*’ And now the other’s voice sounded hideous with hatred too. ‘We are charity workers. This is a charity rummage sale. . . . You *need* help, we *give* it. Here you buy *our* things almost for nothing and the money again goes to the poor of Tientsin. . . .’

‘You are helping me? With *that*?’

And as if seeing the room for the first time, the woman pointed with an open rounded gesture of her arms.

One can rarely view a more repulsive sight than that of a rummage sale, provided things are really old and dirty. Those were.

Embracing the room in a single glance, the woman finally looked at the thing she held in her hand. It was a pair of socks. Woolen they were but well worn. Fifteen cents. She looked intensively, as if those old, colorless, pathetic socks coming from the feet of a mysterious benefactor had hidden somewhere in them the key to the problems of poverty and rummage sales. Then slowly she put them back and looking straight into the lady’s face she said sadly and simply:—

‘In a few years, you will stand on this side of the counter too. . . .’

Here Mrs. Brown, who acted as the president of the sale, cried:—

‘Get out!’ and she lifted her hand. Although the hand was empty, the woman at the other side of the counter winced and the thin, pale girl beside her whispered:—

‘Let us go . . . Mamma, let us go . . .’

The room seemed suddenly flooded with malevolence and hatred. Everyone stared at everyone else with hostility. Not that those people, almost all of them women, were base or cruel, no, they were mostly kind people. Only they lived so much and so long on fear, anxiety, suspicion, that even the best of them grew liable to such fits of malfeasance.

‘Get out!’ Mrs. Brown said again, her voice almost low now.

A tense silence pervaded the room. Customers — Russians and Chinese — and the charity workers behind their counters, all were silent. Hardly half of them could guess what it all had been about, still everyone's heart beat quicker, astir with the awakened hatred of class to class, of race to race, of one human being to another.

The girl took her mother by the arm and they crossed the room under the flushing eyes of the beholders.

Suddenly a very young girl, tall and slender, walked quickly toward Mrs. Brown's counter, and as if her words had been released by a spring, she cried in a voice full of emotion: —

'You!' But instantly afraid and timid she finished gently: 'You are not altogether right' . . . and she ran out of the room.

Above the storm of voices, the best heard was that of the stout Mme. Klimova. Knowing but little English she did not catch what the girl had said. Still, 'Lida,' she cried in a shocked twang, willing to show that she, Mme. Klimova, was on the donors' side.

Several customers, poor Russian women, left the room. One of them, her foot on the threshold, said grievously, addressing nobody in particular: —

'No place is left upon the earth where people do not hate each other . . . the Lord's wrath is on all of us . . .'

Mrs. Brown, born a monolith of common sense, regained her emotional balance as quickly as she had lost it: —

'Be ready for any impudence once you attend a rummage sale.'

And her words sealed the incident.

Mrs. Brown — the President. Mrs. Brown was the president everywhere, in every society she stepped into. And this was unanimous, her election to the presidency. Nobody ever said a word against Mrs. Brown being the president. Never, even to one's bosom friend, not even behind her back.

Mrs. Brown gave so much: her actual presence, her personal guidance, care,

and attention. She even gave money. Sometimes. In cases of direst necessity.

Making other people happy was Mrs. Brown's vocation. Why not, if one knows how? And she was a connoisseur of ways and means. For thirty years she practised her cleverness on the vast and sterile fields of China.

A banker's wife, she never believed that money was very important. She, personally, valued so much more those abstract things. The wonder was that after thirty years of living exclusively for the suffering part of humanity neither the health nor the wealth of Mrs. Brown had been impaired. No. The more she gave the more she had. The more humanity suffered, the more excited Mrs. Brown became, with all those new opportunities of presidency before her. Mrs. Brown had always risen superior to the tasks life thrust on her. And there she stood — big, stout, wealthy, healthy, busy, all aglow in her cerise dress with galloons and tassels and big buttons. She looked like a general leading an everlastingly victorious battle.

Mr. Rind, the honored guest, an American, a traveler, with his curiosity always ablaze, had not caught the key of the scene. 'What is that? What happened?' he repeated looking round. But Mrs. Brown's glance iced the tongues and he found no volunteers to explain. The temperature fell back to normal, and the rummage sale looked again a rummage sale, no more a forge of human passions.

Even Mme. Klimova — after having shown that her sympathy had been as usual with the powerful, for they always had the means to prove they were right — even Mme. Klimova forgot the incident. Hers was not an easy purchase to manage. She wanted a wedding dress. Yes, for herself. An attire fit to wear when she was married in church, to a general. A dress in which to start a new existence as 'Madame la Générale' . . . after a long dawdling as somebody's widow.

The rummage sale could not offer many wedding dresses of Mme. Klimova's size. The possibilities soon narrowed down to a few loose draperies. As she paid her dollar and fifty cents she tried to show her courtesy again and said to the lady behind the counter:—

'Some Russians are even worse than Chinese. When Chinese are poor they behave.'

But the lady did not deign to understand her English. She gave change and said curtly: 'Thank you.'

II

The girl whom Mme. Klimova had called Lida looked quickly along one side of the street, then the other, her light blonde hair tasseled by the fresh October wind, interfering with her vision. At last she saw the two figures crossing the street farther down and ran after them.

With a movement timid and gallant at the same time, she introduced herself:—

'Please,' and she shook hands. 'I saw at once you are newcomers here. At Tientsin we know all our Russians, if only by sight. We live near, here, on the British Concession. . . . Will you come to our house? Mother would be so glad.'

Although Lida and her mother were only two and alone in China, they never gave up the habit of speaking in a style of grandeur about themselves as a 'family.' Lida always said 'we,' and their room in the attic was a 'house' in her language.

The woman, Mme. Platova, and her daughter Galina considered the invitation in silence.

'But, perhaps, your mother is busy?' the woman said at last.

'Oh, no!' Lida answered radiantly. 'Not at all. It is Mother's best day, all free.'

The invitation seemed tempting. The Platovs had come to Tientsin early in

the morning and planned to leave at midnight. They could not indulge in expense and had decided to spend the day just moving around the town. Now it was a temptation to have a rest.

'But are you sure your mother has nothing to do? . . . Would not we be intruders?'

'Why, no,' Lida assured them. 'Mother is on night duty. She is a nurse in the hospital. So she has all the day for herself . . . And she will be so glad. Please, come . . .'

Meanwhile she was rapidly making decisions:—

'I will not buy that sweater . . . in any case, I cannot go back to that sale.' And being amply aware of a dollar squeezed in her left fist she went on mentally plotting: 'Thirty cents for five buns . . . some butter, milk . . .'

'Thank you,' Mme. Platova said. 'I think, perhaps, we might . . . just for a moment.'

The attic room was high up, and both Lida and Galina had to help the tired woman up the narrow stairs. The door was flung open gaily and they were met with a cordial welcome.

Poverty frankly and brazenly grinned at them out of each corner. The room was pervaded with its breath. It mantled the walls, shaded the windowpanes, polished the furniture. It slept with dust, and danced with sun rays. In time it would gnaw deeply into brains and hearts. It is poverty that makes steps cautious, words prudent. It stunts ambitions and grinds down hopes. It makes a fizzle out of the life of so many families.

Still it can be lived with. It simply becomes a part of one's existence like a chronic disease.

In that room the visitors felt instantly at home. They were the same class.

They all of them wore clothes from which all radiance of color and design had faded away long ago (as had also many of their hopes and illusions). All that was left was the sheer substance of tissue, woof and warp, warp and woof—

and also the mere substance of life — days and nights, nights and days, until that sheer substance would be worn through, into a nothingness, a hole, a gap made of vacuity, with no more threads to support it, no more woof and warp, and then no more days and nights.

Colors turn to gray with a pauper, but a friendly welcome, even to poverty, pours forth a golden light. Both the visitors and the hosts were glad to meet each other.

While the girls went downstairs to the kitchen, busy with preparations for tea, the mothers began an earnest conversation. Mme. Platova, again excited, told about the incident at the rummage sale. Now she felt differently about it, and her face and voice showed repentance.

'Least of all could I stand that reproach for having had my children. Those scientifically-minded people presume that having no country, no money, no fixed social standing, one must not bear children. But, my dear, exactly because we have nothing else we need our children so much — to concentrate on them what feelings we would otherwise spend on something else. If one's children can be born healthy, is it not a duty to have them? . . . Oh, dear, it is *they*, our children, those like my *six*, will be taken to fight the next war . . . to fight and die — to protect their sterile lives and their barren efforts to make life fair and square. . . .'

And again her breath became short and difficult.

'You said war,' her hostess asked softly. 'Is it evident that there will be soon another war in Europe? I read almost nothing, and even those Munich days have no clear meaning to me.'

While the question of the coming war was thus discussed, the girls brought in tea.

The decorum of four planned and regular meals a day had been dropped by the 'family' long ago. Dropped and forgotten. Tea and bread were their usual diet; anything else could break in

occasionally, but not necessarily. The tea was hot and gave warmth, the bread was thick and gave one the feeling of having eaten — thus the rite of feeding oneself was performed, even if somewhat perfunctorily. A scientific attitude toward food — vitamins and calories — is not popular among the refugees in China.

But tea was poured, buns were nicely cut into quarters, and with sugar, milk, and butter — that was a tea to be offered with the lordly smile of a hostess.

All were in haste with their first cups. Then followed a moment of relaxation and slower drinking.

The girls with their cups sat at the window, for there was no place at the small table, and Lida was telling Galina in whispers the story of her great love.

It was always puzzling to Lida that put into plain words her story invariably turned into a poor thing, like this.

There was an American boy in Tientsin. That boy was the best boy in the world. His name was Jimmy. Lida and Jimmy met. They fell in love. Jimmy gave her a watch, that one, now on her wrist. But Jimmy had to go to the United States. Lida had to remain. They promised to love each other for ever. They wrote letters.

That was all. Still, even in that shape, it seemed absorbing to another girl, and from time to time she gave out exclamations, as if being told things incredible and wondrous.

The mothers were busy with their conversation too.

'How many children have you?' Mme. Platova asked.

'Children?' Lida's mother repeated slowly, and she clasped her thin hands lightly, in a quick gesture of restraint. 'Lida is my only child. We used to be a big family. Some left, some died . . .'

'Are you a widow?'

Mother's fingers clasped tighter. 'No,' she said, 'Lida's father lives in Russia.'

'In Russia!' Mme. Platova's voice rose high with interest. 'Are you ex-

pecting him to come here? Or do you plan to go there?’

‘No,’ Mother answered slowly. ‘Neither.’ She unclasped her hands and her tired fingers lay quietly on her knees. ‘Lida’s father left us for good. He married a second time. He has children from his second marriage. Two boys. They all live happily.’

Mme. Platova felt uneasy. She instantly turned to another topic.

‘Perhaps I should tell you more about us. Why we are here, at Tientsin. My eldest son, Vladimir, lives in Shanghai. He has a job there — he plays the violin in a night club. Well, the job pays — monthly he sends us forty dollars — thus is our rent paid at Harbin, where we are living. Still I cannot keep quiet: a night club is not a proper place for a boy. Vladimir is twenty-one . . . the things he sees there . . . the things he hears. Some say night-club musicians turn out drunkards. They have to keep late hours — first it is a cup of coffee, then a glass of beer — two, three years — and one’s child has bad habits. . . . Another sorrow, my child Galina,’ she moved her head toward the window where the girls whispered, — ‘this child is unhappy; she hurt her spine long ago, and has constant pains. Doctors sent us to Peking, to the Rockefeller Institution, for X-rays. . . . Ah, X-rays too cost money.’

‘Yes,’ Mother said shortly, ‘yes, everything does.’

‘We went to Peking, to the Rockefellers. . . . They even grew interested in her case. Now I cannot leave her here or send her home alone — and to take her with me to Shanghai — means *two* tickets.’

Mother put her hand on Mme. Platova’s knee and said warmly: —

‘Leave Galina with us, and with God’s help go to Shanghai. This room is all we have — still it offers space enough for the three.’

Mme. Platova’s face grew lighter and lighter, until it became radiant.

‘Oh, thank you,’ she said and smiled the pathetic smile of those who accept a gift and find nothing to give in exchange. ‘I will be so relieved then . . . so relieved.’

‘Mamma,’ Galina cried, ‘Lida can sing! *Really* sing! Oh, Lidochka, sing for us . . .’

‘I am afraid it would not sound well,’ Lida said. ‘I sing better in twilight, when I do not see things . . .’

But the visitors pressed her eagerly.

‘Lida,’ Mother said, ‘sing us the romance Granny liked . . .’

And Lida sang the old romance. She sang it in the old style of pure lyric, her voice high, quiet, melodious.

‘Remember, you gave your sacred promise
To love the poet until he dies . . .’

The room instantly yielded to the charm of music. With the first sounds of the song poverty quickly disappeared. A different room built itself for each of the four women. Sudden peace of soul and mind washed away the remnants of cares and sorrows. When the room was pure and ready, Beauty solemnly stepped in and worked the rest of the magic. She made the girls face the future and the women — the past. Here Joy, in streams, burst forth in the four hearts and hastily cured and healed and soothed and smoothed — until there remained no seams or scars on their memories. Laughing Imagination rushed forth and boldly drew gigantic pictures of things sweeter than they could ever be in life.

This was the only sure happiness in life — happiness in the nonexistent.

III

Galina tapped at the door: —

‘Lida, it is three o’clock.’

With an effort Lida tore herself away from the book. She closed it. She sighed. She looked at Galina with distant eyes.

‘Lida, it is three o’clock. You asked me to call or else you would be late for your lesson.’

'Thank you, Galina. I am going right now.'

Galina gently shut the door and went on downstairs. But Lida could not bring herself back to real life. She had been reading Goethe's *The Sorrows of Young Werther*, and the words still held her:—

Charlotta stood up. She attempted to withdraw her hand. I held it still: 'We shall see each other again,' I exclaimed, 'we shall recognize each other under every possible change.'

'Lida, dear,' Galina's voice insisted. 'You will be late.'

'Yes, Galina. I am going right now.'

Lida went to the window and put her head out. She could see only the high ridged roofs, the tops of the trees, all bare now, and tall sooty chimneys. She lifted her eyes higher—sky! The sky.

'We shall recognize each other under every possible change,' she whispered, 'Jimmy and I . . . I know we shall. Even now—with the Pacific Ocean between us, do I not recognize him everywhere, under any disguise, for all which gives joy to me is Jimmy—disguised, still he. This space, this depth of the sky—it is our love.'

'Lida! Are you coming?' Galina's voice came from below the stairs.

'Coming!' Lida cried in answer.

Lida did not have Jimmy's photo. Had she not him always before her eyes? Was he not always present in her thoughts, whatever she did, wherever she went? Could she forget him? Could she ever forget him? Even if she tried hard? The time and space between them, winds and ocean, were not strong enough to sweep away their love.

'Lida!'

'Coming!'

On the steps of the entrance a dog was sitting. Dog. He had no other name. He remained Dog. He never answered that funny name of Don Juan Tenorio which Carlos Diaz, his third master, once tried to give him. When the boy Carlos had gone off to a boarding school, Dog had been left to himself.

On the steps he was now sitting. Quietly. Concentrating on the vision of his own inner life, the obscure life of an animal.

'Dog,' Lida called to him. She sat beside the dog on the steps, embraced his reluctant neck with her arms and said again in a whisper:—

'Doggy, we are neglected . . . we are forgotten . . . we have no letter this week . . .'

Dog remained stony calm. Not touched. Not at all. He knew the fickleness of human affection. They talk to dogs when they have no letters . . . What is a dog to happy people? A nuisance, usually. Making an effort to escape Lida, and her whisper, and her embrace, he moved a little, politely but decidedly, and then again, as if frozen, merged into his favorite shape—a dog on the steps, brooding over his own problems.

'Doggy, we are not loved so much any more . . . What do you think?'

Dog refused to think. Non-interference. Non-response. Quiet is the ideal of a philosopher's life. Affections are scorned. An intelligent dog once disappointed would not believe in human loyalty . . . To sit there gazing at nothing in particular . . . oh, let a dog alone . . .

'Doggy,' Lida said again, 'I am going now. Keep sitting here, waiting for mail. Anything may happen. Suppose we have a *special delivery*?'

Dog raised his head and gave her one of his rare direct glances—eye to eye—a glance of omniscient and shattering understanding. It was as if he said:—

'And what about *me*? What about those *who were born dogs*?'

Lida felt uneasy under that steady and lucid gaze, deeper than human in intelligence. She rose up. She had to go.

Mme. Manuilova's life was brightened only by Lida's presence. In her youth Mme. Manuilova had been a great opera singer. Those were radiant years of fame

and love, each day raising her higher and higher, to greater happiness, to brighter fame, and then suddenly broken to pieces with nothing left out of all that splendor, except memories sharp and cutting, as pieces of crystal which were once a wonderful whole. Happiness turned into a painful deception. Life turned into a doleful nothingness. Her name known all over Europe now brightened the memories of only a few old lovers of music. Her face adored, admired, worshiped by those who saw it near, by those who saw it only from afar, by those who saw it only on picture post-cards, that face now bore scars of pain and wrinkles of time. Old, old . . . The famous voice was now as unsure as the feet of a child at its first attempt to walk.

Old age found her alone in China, living and counting — counting which would come to an end sooner: her money or her life. In China, cut off from European musical interests, with not a single joy or hope in the future, she found Lida and saw in her the possibilities of a great singer. Mme. Manuilova offered her help and guidance free. She taught the girl not only music and singing but also languages, literature, history, manners, everything. Together, they started a new life, Lida moving toward a glorious future, Mme. Manuilova living once more in her artistic youth.

Today, lessons finished, she said: —

'Now, Lida, one of these days I should like to see your mother. We must discuss some plans concerning your future.'

'Plans? My future?'

'Yes. I should like to take you to Harbin for Christmas and to see you singing in concerts there. In the spring we will go to Shanghai. And before all that you must have your first appearance here, at Tientsin. Just this day I had an invitation from Mrs. Brown.'

'No, Nadejda Petrovna, no . . . You are not serious?'

'Yes, Lida, it is time you began . . .'

'I cannot. I will be afraid . . .'

'That is why you must begin. You have to go through it.'

Suddenly Lida was all radiance.

'Oh, Nadejda Petrovna, oh dear! *Really*, you think I *can* sing in concerts? I must write a letter about that to Jimmy!'

All the rest of that day Lida was exuberantly happy. There was nobody in the house to share her joy. Mother was on duty at the hospital. Galina had gone to church. The Diazes, who gave a free room in the attic to Mother and Lida, had gone somewhere, too. She found the house quiet and empty. Only the Chinese cook was in the kitchen peeling potatoes for the Diazes.

'Cook,' she said, standing on the threshold of the kitchen, 'Cook, have you heard me sing?'

'No. Today me have not.'

'Not just today, how I sing in general . . . What do you think? Is my singing grand? Ah? Say, Cook?'

The cook looked attentively at the potatoes in the bowl.

'All singing,' he said, 'has its points . . .'

'What do you mean by "points"?'

'Standpoints . . .' he said subtly and coolly and his hands grew quick with potatoes.

Lida felt disappointed. She stood in the frame of the door opening into the back yard. November . . . barrenness of soil, deprived of covers. A few dry stalks of rose mallow stuck up out of furrows in one corner . . . a few weeds tall and gray, in another. Last spring's flowers. They had become dry weeds dismally swayed by the wind. They gave out a light, dry, almost unperceptible sound, but Lida's ears caught it, and her heart repeated the rhythm. The autumn winds have dismal tunes.

Lida took a few slow steps into the yard.

The face of the fish pond was dead, unresponsive. Its greenish efflorescence smelt of decay.

She went to the Diazes' sitting room

and sat at the piano. When nobody was in the house, the hours were hers for practice.

She began to play. But she had an urge to sing, to sing in a full-voice, a song she sang once for Jimmy, in the garden.

Softly the door opened and Leon entered the sitting room. He was the Diazes' eldest son, about twenty. He was tall and strikingly handsome, in the best and noblest of Spanish styles.

He slowly approached the piano and stood behind, listening.

'Leon!' Lida cried when she felt his presence. 'Leon, happy news!'

'A letter from Jimmy? Special delivery?' His tone was gentle, but mocking.

'No!' Lida suddenly grew sad. 'Not that much. But Mme. Manuilova said I am ready for concerts. Really, she said. Are you astonished?'

'I am never astonished at you, Lida,' Leon said softly. 'You deserve every happiness.'

'Why? How do you know?'

'Because you never think you deserve it.'

'Leon, you always say something which makes me feel a *señorita*. With you I feel always in an opera box! Come nearer, listen! I have music in my heart. I begin to think in music. I feel I could create music, by myself.'

He leaned against the piano and looked at her with admiring attention.

'All the world could be expressed in music. People, too. Your mother is this — listen — from Bach . . . your father is this from Beethoven, my mother is Tchaikovsky's "Symphonie Pathétique" . . .' and she played and sang melodies to illustrate her words.

'And I?' Leon said.

'You, Leon, you are Brahms's "Second Hungarian Dance." Here is your vitality. Listen . . . your hidden feelings . . .' and she sang it in a full radiant voice.

'My hidden feelings? Have I some?'

'Oh, I do not know why I said "hid-

den." All my life I will remember you at these sounds of Brahms.'

'And you, Lida? What are you in music?'

'I and Jimmy? We are this . . . no! For us I must create music myself,' she grew shy and said timidly: 'I tried, listen' — and she sang and played: —

*'Quand les lilas refleuriront
Dans ce jardin nous reviendrons . . .'*

Suddenly she struck a shrill false note and, jarred by it, stopped.

Leon bent. He took the finger which made the fault and bringing it to his lips he tenderly kissed it.

IV

Mme. Platova came back to Tientsin. She looked smaller and less vital. She resembled the residue of a fruit from which all the juice had been squeezed. Mother instantly knew how the visitor felt by the look in her eyes. She insisted that Mme. Platova should rest overnight and only then return with Galina to Harbin. A room which can house three women is always ready to house the fourth.

Thus again the two mothers were sitting at the small table with their cups of tea, which in this case had to replace a supper. After the first cup Mme. Platova was able to talk. Of course, conversations never help where practical problems are involved; still a sorrow well told becomes not only bearable but almost attractive.

'What I cannot put up with is the casualness of our existence. Really, we feel no solid ground under our feet. We never know what our next day will be like. In vain we try to bring into our children's life some principles of stability, continuity . . . Every day one has to begin from the very beginning . . . We plan this, we try that . . . There is no unity nor sense in such a precarious existence.'

'That used to be my worry, too,'

Lida's mother said quietly, 'when I was younger. Then I found out that there is *always* an inner unity in one's life. Everything which happens is answering a need for its coming . . . I found that out for myself and gave up worry . . . everything has sense . . .'

'Oh, you did?' The guest's voice sounded eager. 'But *what* exactly have you found for yourself? You mean you know *why* all that sorrow came your way?'

'I think I know,' Mother said slowly. 'I was proud. Very proud. Not because of my looks, or breeding, or money — no, worse than that. I was proud of myself . . . mine was a spiritual pride . . . I came from generations of proud people. I kept apart and lofty. Never willingly mixing with others. Well, life is pitiless to the extremes, bad or good. There is a certain moral law, as well as a physical one, which works to bring the extremes to a level . . . I wholly deserved my fate. My life had to be a lesson in humility . . . only it took me twenty years to find joy in my acquired knowledge. I am glad I had it. Pride is a mortal sin.'

'Yes, the only beautiful mortal sin,' Mme. Platova answered.

'Exactly. I was under the spell of that cold and false beauty. I am glad Lida is not like me. She begins with humility . . . Her life will be easier.'

'It makes me good to listen to you . . . Really, I am, perhaps, too preoccupied with the small things of life, and miss its bigger conceptions . . . But, you know, it is hard to be a philosopher with six children in the house . . . for whom one finds no place in the world. We have even no passports for them . . . Must we try to get back to Russia? Must we try to send them abroad, if only the boys . . . *Where, how* could our children be sheltered from the horrors of life? Where would their life be easier? To send them abroad?'

'I did,' said Mother low, 'I let my nephew Dima go to England. A rich

English lady adopted him. A good and kind woman . . . And now — is not England under the threat of a war, too? Will not our Dima face there just those things from which we tried to shelter him by sending him to England?'

'With England it seems so unbelievable . . .'

'Yes. We let the boy go. But then again . . . Suppose we kept Dima here. He was underfed, always, from his birth. He was growing up a very delicate boy . . . He could develop consumption . . . Such a dear boy' . . . and she sighed.

'Let yourself take it this way.' Now Mme. Platova eagerly entered her rôle of a consoler. 'Nobody knows about the future — if there will be a war in England or not — meanwhile the boy had a sea voyage, and this means so much for a child, for health and for his brains too. He had plenty of air, plenty of food — they have wonderful fare on those liners — new interests — the lady is kind — good treatment — why, only rich people can afford things that your boy is having. This change may render him so much stronger that he will meet better whatever happens to him in the future . . .'

The room seemed brighter with every word. The tea tasted much better too.

'We race with time,' Mme. Platova was saying. 'Every year of quiet life is very important. It makes children so much stronger, more stable morally. It builds them. Now about my son Vladimir in Shanghai. Goodness . . . I arrived in Shanghai late in the evening. I found his poor room all bare, but tidy. I looked over his things, counted his linen . . . you know the way boys sew buttons on, or mend . . . I cried over his shirts . . . Then I felt I could not wait for him any longer. It was eleven o'clock and he could not come home until three o'clock in the morning.'

'Do they keep such late hours?'

'They do. I left the house. Shanghai is, in a way, fascinating at night. The

streets were full of movement and lights . . . and the people . . . You never see *that* sort of people during the day.'

Here Lida and Galina entered the room, both fresh and cold, eager for tea. They put their cups on the window sill. Their supper — two sandwiches — was neatly arranged for them on two separate dishes. Busy with food they paid no attention to what Mme. Platova was saying.

'That was the first time in my life I had entered a night club. "Stop Here" was the name. It was bitter to think there was no other place, no other work for a son of mine . . .'

And she sighed.

'I had hardly entered when I saw a terrible brawl going on. Afterwards I knew what it was. Just a group of the American marines who had to return to their barracks before midnight. All were drunk, of course. There was one who did not want to go, just refused to move. The others, who could still think, realized the grave consequences of being late. They pushed him, they tried to drag him, all the rest of the guests and waiters helping, but he turned out to be the strongest of the crew, a prize athlete. He just kept sitting there. Then they began to beat him . . .'

Here the girls began to listen.

'It was a terrible sight. This man, all red in face, his muscles tense and his neck purple, sat at a table and two marines kept beating him with a flowerpot. They held it by the stem of the plant and — under command of the onlookers — they beat and beat him on the head . . .'

A sigh of terror rose in the room.

'Finally, the pot broke and the earth covered the man altogether. Then he rose up, — in the clouds of dust, — sneezed and cried out: "If you want to kill me, take another flowerpot . . ."

The girls burst into laughter and the women began to laugh too.

'Well,' Mme. Platova said, 'at that moment I did not laugh. I knew my son

was somewhere there. I rushed forward and cried: "Son, son, where are you?" The marine reached out toward me and cried: "Here I am, Ma!" Then I saw Vladimir. He knew I would be soon at Shanghai, he recognized me and ran toward me, too, and he cried: "Mother!" and then to the marine: "Let her go. She is my mother!" "Maybe, she is mine, too," the marine cried, and wept and did not let me go . . .'

The girls now laughed helplessly.

'Well,' Mme. Platova said again, 'It was not so gay for me at that moment . . .'

'And what then? What then?' the girls pressed her.

'The other marines urged that man to go, but he said he would move only if I led him by his hand, as his mother used to do, when he was a child. All urged me, too. You see, they were all drunk. The waiters were eager to put an end to the brawl, so they just pushed us out. Vladimir went with me . . . and there I was walking amidst a drunken crew of American marines, leading by the hand a big man, who sobbed.'

The girls laughed until tears came. Mme. Platova seemed on the verge of anger, but again she gave in and laughed too.

'And the people on the streets were looking with glee . . . I felt terribly unhappy . . . Imagine how it all seemed . . .'

'But, Mamma,' Galina interrupted her, 'you always said that the important thing is not what things *seem* but what they *are* . . .'

'And what *are* they, or *were* they?' Mme. Platova said almost angrily. 'There I was — your mother — in the group of drunken men, at night, in an unknown town . . . Well, happily, that big man soon came to himself.'

She sighed, then continued: —

'He understood he had to be in the barracks before midnight. He let my hand free, he thanked me, calling me "Mother," and insisted on giving me

a present. He actually gave me one American dollar and insisted that I keep it.'

'You have it?'

She looked for it in her handbag and finally found the silver dollar. It was the first American dollar they had ever seen. A big one, a heavy one. Real money of silver or gold is rare in Asia.

'Mamma,' Galina said suddenly, 'he was a good man. What if he was drunk? I think he was a good man.'

'And what will you do with the dollar?' Lida said and caught her mother's reproachful glance. Her look said it was not 'good manners.'

Here Mme. Platova laughed gaily:—

'We shall spend it for our Christmas tree. I always manage to give my children a Christmas tree. This year it will be with presents. After exchanging this dollar I will have eight of our Harbin dollars. We are eight. One can do things at a dollar per person!'

She went on now sadly:—

'I had to leave my son there . . . So far, Vladimir is all right, but I shall not have a moment of peace now. A young boy . . . He is handsome, too . . . He pays our rent. Still I asked him to come home and live with us. "Our house is dull without your violin," I said. "You loved Chopin." "Chopin is Chopin everywhere," he said. "I love his music even better when I see the squalor of this life around me." . . . Well, I left him there' . . . and she began to wipe tears with the end of her handkerchief.

It was time to go to sleep. They all had to go to bed at the same time, for there could be no spare space to move in the room. The only comfortable bed, a sofa, was given to the guest. Mme. Platova protested at first, but too tired after her three-day journey, she finally gave in.

Meanwhile a great wind arose outside, in the outer world. It came from the desert of Gobi and brought with it some sand not yet spent on the way. It slashed that dead dust of the desert

against the walls and windows — with a howl and desolate sighs. Thousands of low sounds arose and made a symphony — the whine of a wire, screeching of a loose piece of thin iron, tapping of a wooden board, strange pinching sounds around the walls, as if somebody — blind — were cautiously moving around, trying to find the door and to be let in. . . .

Only Lida was deaf to it. She had had a letter from Jimmy that morning. She went to church to thank God for it in the evening, and now, happy, she slept and the doleful wind symphony was a lullaby.

The less happy are less ready with sleep.

The mystery of sleep was slow to come. It lingered on the threshold of life, prelude to unconsciousness, to a halt in living, to a hint of death.

When it came at last, all were at rest. Then deeply hidden, in the subconscious, an intensive motion began: disordered thoughts, occasional acts, unfinished sentences, tangled emotions, things one has been afraid to face, or those on which one lingered willingly — all began to interweave, to tie, to fix into a pattern, into a unity — and the soul was ready for a new day, which approached — all done, all ready, as fate.

V

Lida opened the window and looked down into the yard. There, below, the gate had clicked. She was on her guard for that sound. No matter what else she was doing, she was always listening for the mailman's steps. Every moment could bring Jimmy's letter. This time it did not.

Leon was crossing the yard. He looked up and met Lida's eyes. From the attic window, so high above, she seemed illusory, unreal. She looked at him only for a brief moment, her eyes dilated and darkening with disappointment. His face grew sombre with the reflection of

her disappointment at seeing him. No, he was not that grinning Chinese mailman; she would not rush downstairs with a cry of joy to meet him.

Too busy with her thoughts, Lida made no sign of recognition. She did not even smile. Perhaps she did not know it was Leon. She knew it was *not* the mailman. All the rest of the men in the town were of no interest to her.

And she disappeared into the attic. The window frame clicked.

Leon stood a minute longer looking up at the dead face of the closed window. With a reticence characteristic of him he made not a single movement to show how he felt. But that immobility for one full of his youthful vigor was a revelation in itself.

Lida was dejected. For ten days now she had not received any letters from Jimmy.

There are certain moods of a human soul so burning, so deep, that they still remain beyond description. To be in love is one of them, to wait for letters — another. Lida went simultaneously through both. She was living not from morning to evening, but from one mail to another. Those were the sharp moments of expectancy, time in between had to be endured, somehow suffered through.

She looked round and the room seemed barer to one now bereft of hope.

And this was the day of her first appearance in a concert.

Her dress, freshly ironed, lay on the sofa.

The door opened and Dog came in. He looked up. He saw things, their dimensions and proportions, from a different angle. He never was charmed with what he saw. Being a dog he saw no colors. For him the brightest attractions were smells. Among smells, the scents of food, and animals, and people. Among the people those who smelt naturally, of their flesh. He hated the scents of chemical compounds. And that girl, whom they called Lida, smelt of soap.

Cheap soap. The cheapest soap. Here was the reason why Dog could not support Lida's nearness for a long time. But she was unaware of it.

'Dog!' she said sadly. 'Doggy, we are singing today in a concert, for a great public. What do you say?'

Dog said nothing. He only moved his jaws.

'Could not you say something? Just a word for me. Just "Dear Lida, do not worry" . . . Say it.'

This was stupid, and the dog turned to leave.

'Do you remember Dima?' Lida asked him.

Dog lingered on the threshold.

'Dima was a dear boy. How we loved him. We cannot ever reconcile ourselves to his absence. Can we?'

That silly talk . . .

The dog looked at Lida once more. With scorn, almost with superiority. And left the room.

Later in the afternoon she went downstairs to the Diazes' sitting room, ready for her concert. The mere fact of wearing her splendid dress — really magnificent with all its flounces and frills — elated Lida, and she entered the room with an aerial lightness.

The Diazes were a peculiar family. Each of them could speak several languages, yet they were mostly silent. Noble and quiet in appearance, they presented a beautiful and strange picture of still life when they sat together. Lida was always startled when she happened to step into a perfectly silent room and found it full of people. They would not move even their heads in sign of greeting, but only smiled faintly. Nobody was ever ill or unhappy, or very happy, in that family. They were the same, always. Never in haste, never in pain, never afraid, never in ecstasy or indignation. But volumes would be required to retell only the Countess's life alone. She was born in a Russian aristocratic family, lost everyone and everything during the Revolution, married Count Diaz,

whom she had known while he was attached to the Spanish Embassy, and left for Spain. She saw another revolution there, with losses of lives and property in their family, and then left for China exactly in time to witness the Japanese invasion. They did not belong to any political party, were repelled by the wrongdoings of each, and fatalistically endured poverty and exile. They remained always themselves — noble, quiet, and invariably benevolent to all.

Seeing Lida in her evening splendor, Maria, the daughter of the family, said: —

‘Beautiful.’

And the Countess asked: —

‘Ready for the concert? Who is coming for you?’

‘Nobody. I am going by myself.’

The idea of a young girl, fatherless, with her mother busy, going alone to her first concert seemed pathetic.

‘No,’ the Countess said, ‘you must not go alone. Where is Leon?’

‘Leon will not be home until nine o’clock,’ said Maria.

‘But I can go alone, all right,’ Lida said. Her excitement was dropping, for a reason she could not perceive.

‘How do you plan to get there, Lida?’ the Countess asked.

‘I will walk.’

‘Walk? In this dress?’

‘I could take a rickshaw. I have ten cents.’

Here the Count rose.

‘I shall go with you, Lida, and will remain there until Leon comes. You, my dear, send him as soon as he returns,’ he added, addressing his daughter.

‘I shall help you to dress,’ the Countess offered, and they both left the room.

When the Count came back he wore his best suit and looked so distinguished that Lida suddenly felt important and all in a holiday mood. Shivering with anticipation, she left the room. The Count helped her into a taxi and Lida, shaken by this luxury, thanked him all the way.

He listened first with a charming deference, then he said: —

‘Before a concert it is better not to talk for a while.’

When Lida entered the auditorium she was followed by cold, almost hostile glances. The audience consisted mostly of ladies. It was an ‘International Friendship’ reception, and foreign Tientsin was well represented. Lida was the only Russian there, for Russians are poor and international friendship is costly.

Mrs. Brown was the president there too. Her strategy of giving charity concerts was simple, but the outcome always successful. She fixed the prices for tickets and sent invitations. Those invitations were considered a great honor. They were looked forward to, counted on. To fail in receiving one meant almost social disaster. It happened when one’s social career was moving downhill. Of course, one could *buy* a ticket at the entrance, but that meant signing one’s social ostracism with one’s own hand.

In this elite gathering of foreign Tientsin Lida was unknown, and her appearance in a gala dress seemed near to being an offense. The ladies looked at her accordingly, but faces brightened when the Count entered the field of vision. Even those who did not know him felt happier — there could be no mistake about *him*. He produced something approaching a mild sensation.

Seeing so much splendor around and so little friendliness, Lida took her seat timidly beside the Count. Only now did she understand how she would have felt alone in that brilliantly lit and very spacious room, full of people so sure of their worth and superiority. Looking at the Count she felt proud to be with him.

I could have a father like him, she thought, and the idea of having a father seemed to her unbelievable luck. She tried to *look* a Count’s daughter and was sitting softly erect as she had been taught at home when Granny was alive,

for Granny knew everything about good manners and was sure they made social life beautiful.

Meanwhile a lady opened the performance. She played a harp. That was the first harp Lida had ever seen.

This opening item on the program was more picturesque than musical. The scheme of colors had been carefully worked out. The harp was golden. The lady's hair was dyed to match the harp, while her dress — the brightest blue velvet — was conceived to strike a note of contrast. The velvet was arranged to fall down in curved, almost audible folds. The next item was the lady's hands. While her bare arms almost matched the harp in a surprising goldness of flesh, her nails, geranium petals, struck a contrast to the dress. So much refinement needed a frame, and *music* was a frame to the lady.

The lady was thanked with applause, and the next performers took their places.

Six gentlemen and six ladies sang old Scotch songs. It was a most interesting event, only it had no relation to music. All the ladies and the gentlemen had no voices and less ears. None was younger than fifty. They could not even keep the measure, everyone performing by himself, although the oldest gentleman, an octogenarian Scot, stamped his foot and moved his eyebrows and swung his fist to portray the melody.

Still there was a pathetic — if not beauty, then attractiveness in the scene. All those people were old. All were moving quickly down the hill of life. They scarcely hoped to see Scotland again. Yet in spite of long lives of travels, of events, of foreign countries, foreign languages, alien climates, alien songs, they kept intact a certain warmth toward their cradle, their mother — Scotland. Nothing was better, nothing was dearer, nothing could efface or erase her from their hearts. And they sang her — The Glorious Native Country — in false old voices, without tune, or

measure, or rhythm, yet sang her with warmth and love.

The six ladies and six gentlemen bowed with dignity and sang encores. Then the Scotch voices from the audience asked for one song more. The chorus talked a little among themselves. It seemed they were not sure they could oblige their public with it. Finally they took the challenge and vocalized something utterly unlike a song. Lida felt bewildered, but the audience became noisily appreciative. Lida was naïve. She did not know that a 'concert' does not always mean 'music.' The other thing she did not know was the social standing of the singers. They were, from right to left, a banker, a lawyer, a minister, a doctor, and two owners of big estates, and some of the audience were their subordinates.

Here Mme. Manuilova came to take Lida, and with a failing heart she felt that she was afraid to sing before the audience.

Timidly she ascended the platform and stood under the cool eyes of the audience. Contrary to custom, Lida was not met with applause. As the artists were to receive nothing for their participation, Mme. Manuilova felt pricked by that lack of courtesy to the young girl, especially significant after the generous appreciation given to the others. But Lida was so afraid and shy that she had not noticed any difference in the reception. She just stood shyly and a little clumsily, slightly trembling all over . . . She felt scared. Suddenly she saw Leon.

He entered the auditorium and walked quickly to his place in the third row. He looked at Lida. He had never seen her in that evening dress, never had seen her passably well-dressed. Now she stood there — higher than anybody else — all white, all young, shy, timid, modest, beautiful. He looked, as he went, and smiled, and his eyes were luminous with admiration.

Mme. Manuilova began to play, and

suddenly everything changed, all was different.

With joy, with delight, with elation, Lida began to sing. Nothing but music existed in the world.

The room grew misty, moved away, disappeared. Lida rose in the air, and slowly began to move upward. She soared over life.

She sang, and a tear rolled down her cheek.

'What is that? . . . why that tear?' somebody thought for her, in the background of her mind. '*I am singing,*' she answered quickly — not to interrupt that joy and happiness.

There are beautiful things that we admire, and enjoy in the full presence of our critical powers. There are other beautiful things which are so congenial to our souls that we enjoy them without criticism, and suffer while enjoying. In a mysterious way they project our personality against the background of eternity and one feels how humble is one's fate, how limited one's powers, how finite one's talents, and how fleeting one's life. This was the kind of charm Lida's singing had on Leon.

Every sound of Lida's voice evoked immediately an answering vibration in Leon's breast, as if it were he who was singing, — nay, as if they were singing together, Lida and he, — as if those wonderful sounds were begotten by them both, at the same time, in one mutual breath.

The storm of applause was tremendous for an audience so reticent and well-balanced as that was. It was more than applause. It was an acceptance of Lida. Now she *existed* at Tientsin. Now she was *known*, to be recognized, remembered, talked about. Her poverty, nationality, her social standing, were forgiven.

Here Mrs. Brown — dignity in lilac silk — approached solemnly. When Lida looked at her and recognized the lady from the rummage sale she gave a low cry and trembled. But who was she to

be remembered by Mrs. Brown? Mrs. Brown could no more discriminate between two customers at a rummage sale than she could between two flies that had been especially troublesome in summertime. She approached Lida grandly, but looking down into her face — youthful, pathetic, wistful, beautiful — she suddenly made a quite un-Brownesque movement. Before the unbelieving eyes of the onlookers she kissed Lida on the brow and said: —

'Angel, you made me cry!' And what was more unbelievable, she took off her beautiful Chinese pin which fastened the flowers to her breast — and gave it to Lida, the pin and the flowers too.

VI

With Mrs. Brown's flowers in her hands Lida was on her way home. Leon was taking her there in a taxi.

'You know,' Lida said dreamily, 'every time I have seen a car, in the evening, all lit from within — as ours is now — and two young people sitting inside — as we are now — and flowers — like those in my hands — I used to wonder how happy those two people must be. For one who treads the streets forlornly . . . alone . . . in twilight, in wind and cold — they seem a dazzling vision of happiness. Now this happens to me, and I feel nothing except sadness . . .'

'No letters this week?' Leon said with gently mocking compassion.

But she did not notice the mockery.

'Almost *two* weeks,' she answered, and with the grace of a bird she turned her head aside to hide her face from his view.

They sat silent. She — not looking at him. Trying to imagine and then to believe that he was Jimmy. He — with vigilant hope, on the watch for her every movement, trying to imagine and then to believe that she was his bride. Sitting close to each other, in the same car, they were moving in different directions, chasing diverse mirages, and the distance

between them grew speedily, for in her thoughts she traveled further and further away, to that wondrous town in California with the silvery name of Berkeley. Once there, she made an effort to sweep the crowds aside and to find Jimmy among them. She moved away from reality so speedily that her mental vagrancy reduced to nothing her physical presence. Leon looked for possible means to keep her with him a little longer.

'I think your mother would like to know about the concert,' he said at last. 'Let us go to the hospital and tell her.'

'In the taxi?'

'Yes, in this taxi.'

'But it will cost too much.'

'Lida,' and Leon took her hand with the flowers into both of his, 'news. You see before you a rich young gentleman. Want the details?'

'Oh,' Lida cried with joy. 'Really? I have heard that some property is being restored to your family. I am proud to be with you. You are my first rich friend. All right, pay for the taxi.'

'I can do more than that. I can marry and live anywhere and give my wife almost everything . . .'

'Oh, I should like to be your wife, if only you were Jimmy,' she said, and they both laughed.

At the hospital Mother congratulated Lida:—

'I am glad you sang well, my artist,' and she kissed her. 'Now go home and rest.'

Leon felt he could not let her go. He invited Lida to a fashionable restaurant for supper and asked Mother's permission to take her.

'Please, please,'—the girl was all excitement,—'may we go? I have never been in a restaurant. I have seen them in movies. Mamma, it is such a luxury . . . palms . . . music. And I am very hungry now . . .'

Mother granted her permission.

Ready to go, Lida gave a hasty look around the room, and suddenly it struck

her as something unreal. A poorest hall in a poorest hospital. And she clearly saw herself, standing in the middle of that dingy room in her white dress, with flowers . . . her mother in the pitiful uniform of a nurse . . . Leon—handsome and healthy . . . and rich now. Somewhere, behind those walls, were hidden all the terrors of illness in poverty, and death in exile . . . With a startling clairvoyance she saw it all from a distance, as the many-sidedness of life . . .

'What keeps it all together?' she thought, and a flush of unexplicable fear shook her. She trembled.

'What is it? What is the matter with you?' Mother asked. Leon caught Lida by the arm.

'She is tired.'

'Perhaps it is better for her to go straight home . . .'

'I will take care of Lida,' Leon said. 'We will not be late. We shall sit quietly at our supper and then go home. I will take care of her.'

The fresh November air helped instantly.

'Yes, perhaps I am too tired tonight,' Lida said. 'Let us have a nice supper.'

In the restaurant she was so impressed with its splendor that she spoke in whispers:—

'Are you *sure* you inherited that money? Otherwise, let us go home.'

Leon sat her at a cosy small table under a palm. (*Real? Artificial?* And she touched it. *Artificial. All dry.*)

'Yes,' she said aloud. 'Splendor. I wonder what they serve for supper. In a place like this . . .'

Suddenly she felt that Leon was looking at her intensely.

'Why are you looking at me like that? Have I said something stupid?'

'No. You haven't. It is because you are charming. More, you are beautiful. Even more, unique. I love you.'

Lida's head jerked up.

'No,' she cried. Then she laughed, 'It was a joke,' and she smiled. 'That is

what they say while waiting for supper under an artificial palm.'

'No, Lida. I would not make a joke of that kind. This is most serious. I would be happy to marry you.'

'Leon'—she was rising now. 'You must not talk to me like that. You know all about me. I am sorry . . . I had better go home. You sup alone . . .'

He rose too.

'Do not,' he said softly. 'Whatever I feel, I will say no more. I am sorry —'

'Well —' Lida softened too. 'I shall stay with you . . . Only do not say those words any more. Do not spoil this evening for me.'

She said that word 'spoil' simply, which made it a harder blow. Still Leon did not show outwardly how wounded he felt.

There was no time for further love talk, for the waiter was standing at their table with the menu.

'What will you have?'

'I? I will eat everything that they give for supper.' . . .

They decided to go home on foot.

When they came to their house Lida halted on the steps. The air was cold and still. She lifted her face and looked up to the sky, now bright stars. She looked at the small fleeting clouds and at the mysterious moon.

Leon took her hand.

'Now, Lida, under this sky, let us try to find out what *is* love. *Why* really do we love?'

She did not move her eyes from the vision of the sky. And standing thus — in the halo of moonshine — with the big shadow of the house behind, she said: —

'Why? I do not know . . . Perhaps because it was spring then . . . We lived all together — our family — Granny, Dima, Peter, our dear friend, old Professor . . . life was so full, so full . . . We sang often . . . I met Jimmy . . .'

Then she eagerly turned her face to Leon: —

'I really think I know *why* I fell in love. Because I was *happy* then. I fell in love to *complete my happiness* . . .'

He looked at her with tender, but still mocking eyes.

'With me it was different,' he said, 'I met you when I was tired, disgusted with life . . . We had no money in this foreign country . . . Mother trying to work and keep us *men* . . . Father terribly unhappy . . . I felt humiliated at being helpless while young and strong. I met you when I was *terribly unhappy*. I fell in love with you to *complete my unhappiness* . . .'

They both laughed.

'You see,' Lida said. 'You must not ask. There are no rules or laws. Each case has its individual logic.'

And with light steps she entered the house.

He remained in the hall while she was going upstairs, and the sounds of her presence moved away with her. The staccato sounds of high heels against the steps . . . Steps higher and higher, sounds lower and lower . . . then the sound of her door closed. Good-bye, Love! There was, there could be, no power, no force strong enough to make her understand, to make her run down the stairs and say something to alleviate her innocent cruelty.

(To be continued)

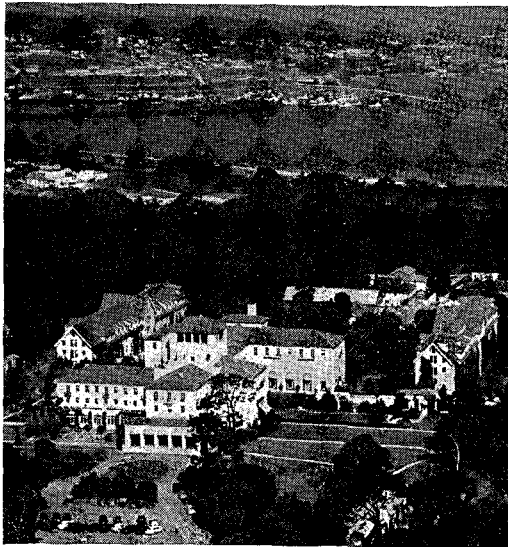
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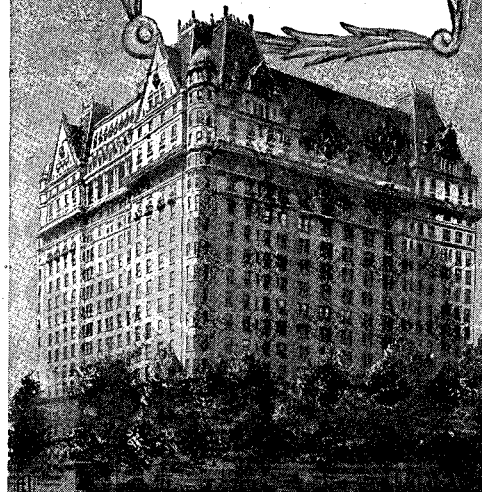
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